

PERSIAN LETTERS.

Translated by Mr. OZELL.

VOLUME *the* SECOND.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. Tonson : And Sold by Thomas
Combes, at the Bible and Dove in Pater-noster-
Row ; and James Lacy, at the Ship between
the Two Temple Gates, in Fleetstreet. 1722.

PERSIAN

LETTERS.

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LONDON:

Printed for J. Tonks: And Sold by Thomas
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Persian *Letters.*

LETTER LXXI.

Rice to * * *

I Have heard much Talk of a kind of Court of Judicature, call'd the *French Academy*: There is certainly no Tribunal upon the face of the Earth so little respected as this is; For the Judges no sooner make a Decree, but the People reverse it, and impose Laws even on them, which they are obliged to obey.

A 2

It

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It is not long since, in order to fix their Authority, they put out a Code of their Decisions: This Child of many Fathers was in a manner old as soon as born; and tho' he was Legitimate, yet a Bastard that pept into the World before him, had like to have stifled him in the Birth.

These Judges have nothing in the world to do but to prate incessantly. Panegyric enters insensibly into all their Babble; and as soon as ever they initiate a Member into their Mysteries, the Dæmon of Flattery takes possession of him, and never after leaves him 'till he leaves the World.

It is a Body with forty Heads, all cramm'd with Tropes, Metaphors and Antitheses; their Mouths no sooner open, but out flies an Exclamation; their Ears expect always to be entertain'd with Cadence and Harmony. As for Eyes, they are out of the question; their Business is Talking, not Seeing.

Persian Letters.

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ing. This Body cannot yet stand well on its Legs; for Time, its mortal Enemy, makes it totter every Moment, and pulls down whatever it builds up. Its Hands were formerly said to be somewhat griping: I shall say nothing to this Point, leaving it to be settled by those who know more of the matter than I do.

These are Chimæra's not to be found in our Country; The *Persian* Genius is not turn'd for these out-of-the-way Establishments: We always follow Nature in the Simplicity of our Customs, and hate an affected Singularity of Manners.

Paris, 27th of the Moon
Zilbagè, 1715.

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LET-

LETTER LXXII.

*Rica to Usbek, at * * **

SOME Days ago a Man of my Acquaintance says to me: I promised to introduce you into some good Families in *Paris*; I will now carry you to a great Lord, that acts up to his Character the best of any Man in the Kingdom.

What is your Meaning by that, Sir? Is he more polite, more affable than others? Not so, says he. Oh, I understand you: He makes every body that comes near him know by all his Actions the Superiority he has over them: If this be it, I have no Business to go with you: I already own the Bill; he is my Superior as much as he thinks fit.

However, go I must; and I found a little Man so fierce; he took a Pinch of Snuff with so much State,

Persian Letters.

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State, he blow'd his Nose so unmercifully, and spit with so much Flegm; he made much of his Dogs in a manner so offensive to every body, that I was never weary of admiring at him. Good God! says I to my self, if when I was in the Court of *Persia*, I acted thus, I acted like a very great Fool! We must have been of a very ill Disposition, *Usbek*, to have done a hundred little Insults to People that came every Day to our Houses to shew us their Good-will; they knew very well we were above them; and tho' they had not, our Favours must every Day have convinced them of it. Having no Occasion to use Arts to make ourselves respected, we did every thing that we thought wou'd make us beloved: We were accessible to the Meanest: In the midst of those Honours which usually harden the Heart of Man, they always found ours sensible to every generous Impression; they saw nothing but

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our Souls above them; we descended to their very Wants. But when it was necessary to support the Majesty of our Prince in public Ceremonies; when Occasion offered to create a Respect towards our Nation in Strangers; or when, in extreme Perils, we were to enflame the Courage of our Soldiers; we rose a hundred times higher than we before descended; we called back all our Fierceness into our Countenances, and we were sometimes thought to have *acted* up to ourselves.

Paris, 10th of the Moon

Saphar, 1715.

LETTER LXXIII.

Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice.

I Have not found among the Christians that lively Persuasion of their Religion which is observable

vable in the Mussulmans: There is a great Difference here between Profession and Belief, between Belief and Conviction, between Conviction and Practice. Religion is not a Cause of Holiness but of Contention, in which every body engages: Courtiers, Soldiers, nay the very Women stand up against the Clergy, calling upon them to prove what they are resolved not to believe. Not that they have taken this their Resolution upon Reason, or have given themselves the Trouble to examine the Truth or Falseness of the Religion which they reject: Their rebellious Necks have just felt the Yoke, and they have shook it off without knowing what it was. Neither are they more fixed in their Incredulity than in their Faith; they live in a continual Flux and Reflux, which is perpetually driving them from the one to the other. One Day one of them plainly told me: I believe the Immortality of the Soul by

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sits; my Opinions absolutely depend upon the Constitution of my Body; according as I have more or fewer animal Spirits; as my Stomach digests well or ill; as the Air I breathe is subtile or gross; as the Meats I feed on are light or heavy: I am a Spinofist, Socinian, a Catholic, an Atheist or a Bigot. When the Physician is at my Bed-side, my Confessor has me at an Advantage. I take care not to let Religion afflict me when I am in Health; but I allow it to comfort me when I am sick: When I have nothing more to hope for on the side of this World, Religion steps in and wins me with her Promises of the next; I am e'en willing to give my self over to her then, and to die in hope.

A long while ago the Christian Princes set free all the Slaves in their Dominions, saying that Christianity renders all Men equal. It is true, indeed, this Act of Devotion was of great Service to them

in their ſecular Concerns, as it humbled the Lords by withdrawing the common People from their Obedience: Afterwards they made Conqueſts in Countries, where they found it convenient to have Slaves; then they allowed the buying and ſelling of them, forgetting that Principle of Religion which before had touched them ſo cloſe. What ſhall we call this? Truth at one time, Error at another. Why do not we act like theſe Chriſtians? We are very ſilly to reſuſe ſine Settlements and eaſy Conqueſts in happy Climates, * becauſe they have not Water pure enough for us to waſh in according to the Principles of the Holy Alcoran.

I return Thanks to God Almighty, who ſent *Haly*, his great Prophet, that I profeſs a Religion which

* The Mahometans have no great Deſire to ſake Venice, becauſe they would have no Water there fit for their Purifications.

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which raises its Followers above all humane Views, and which is pure as Heaven, from whence it was brought down.

Paris, 13th of the Moon
Saphar, 1715.

LETTER LXXIV.

Usbek to his Friend Ibben,
at Smirna.

THE Laws are furious in Europe against those that kill themselves: They are in a manner put to Death a second time: They are dragg'd ignominiously thro' the Streets: They are marked with Infamy: Their Goods are forfeited.

These Laws, Ibben, appear to me very unjust. When I am oppressed with Grief, with Misery and Contempt, why should I be hindered from putting an End to my Sufferings, and be inhumanly de-

deprived of a Remedy which I have in my own Hands ?

Why must I be forced to labour for a Society which I am willing to throw up my Share in ? Why must I stand to a Compact made without my Knowledge ? Society is founded upon mutual Advantage. When it grows burdensome to me, what should keep me from renouncing it ? Life was given me as a Favour ; I may consequently give it back when it is no longer so : The Cause ceases ; the Effect must cease of course.

Would the Prince have me continue his Subject, when I reap none of the Advantages of Subjection ? Can my Fellow-Citizens desire so unequal a Partition, as Convenience to them, and Despair to me ? Will God, quite different from all other Benefactors, oblige me to receive Mercies that make me wretched ?

I am bound to obey the Laws, when I live under the Laws : But when I am dead, what Power have they over me ?

But,

14. *Persian Letters.*

But, say they, you disturb the Order of Providence. God hath united your Soul to your Body, and you part them: You therefore oppose his Designs, and rebell against his Will.

What does this mean? Do I disturb the Order of Providence, when I only alter the Modifications of Matter, and make square a Bowl which the first Laws of Motion, that is to say, the Laws of Creation and Preservation, made round? No, doubtless: I only use the Right which was bestowed upon me, and in this sense I may disturb all the Parts of Nature, just according to my own Whim, without being chargeable with rebelling against Providence.

When my Soul is parted from my Body, will there upon that Account be less Order and Symmetry in the Universe? Do you believe the new Modification will be less perfect or less dependant upon the general Laws? Or that the World will

will lose the least Particle, or the Works of God be less Great, or, to speak more properly, less Immense?

Do you think my Body, when changed into an Ear of Corn, a Worm, a Piece of Turf, will be a work less worthy of Nature? Or that my Soul disencumbered of all her terrestrial Cloggs, will become less sublime?

All these Notions, my dear *Iben*, have no other Springs but our Pride; we do not see our own Insignificancy; and come what will, we are resolved to be Something of consequence in the Universe, and to make a Figure in the Creation. We fancy that the Annihilation of a Being of our Perfection, would almost ruin all Nature: And we do not conceive that one Man either more or less in the World, what do I say, One, all Mankind in general, a hundred Millions of Worlds like ours, are no more than a little minute Atom, which God perceives
only

16. Persian Letters:

only because of the Immensity of his Faculties.

Paris, 15th of the Moon
Saphar, 17 5.

LETTER LXXV.

Rica to Usbek, at * * *

I Send thee a Copy of a Letter wrote by a *Frenchman* now in *Spain*, to a Friend here; I believe thou wilt be glad to see it.

I HAVE been now six Months rambling over *Spain* and *Portugal*; and I have lived among a People that despising all other Nations, do the *French* alone the Honour to hate them.

Gravity is the shining Part of the Character of both these Nations: It is manifested chiefly two ways; by Spectacles, and by Mustachios.

The

The Spectacles infallibly demonstrate the Wearer to be a Man consummate in the Sciences, and buried in profound Reading to such a degree as to have weakened his Sight by it: And every Nose herewith adorned or saddled, may safely be concluded to be the Nose of a deep Scholar.

As to the Mustachio, it is venerable in it self, independently of any Consequences; not but that great Advantages have often been drawn from it to the Service of the Prince and the Honour of the Nation; as particularly by a famous *Portuguese* General in the *Indies**, who being in want of Money, cut off one of his Mustachios, and sent it to the Inhabitants of *Goa*, desiring them to lend him twenty thousand Pistoles upon that Pledge: They readily accepted the Security, and he afterwards, with great Honour, redeemed his Mustachio.

We

* *Juan de Castro.*

We may easily imagine that a People so grave and stegmatic, are not wholly free from Vanity: And really they have their Share. They usually ground it upon two Points of very considerable Consequence. They that live on the Continent of *Spain* and *Portugal*, are hugely lifted up in their Hearts, if they are what they call Old Christians, that is, if they are not Descendants from those whom the Inquisition in these latter Days has persuaded to embrace the Christian Religion. They who live in the *Indies* are no less puff'd up, when they consider that they have the exalted Merit of being, as they say they are, Men with white Skins. There never was in the Seraglio of the *Grand Signior* a *Sultana* so vain of her Beauty, as is the most wretched old Rascal of the tawny Whiteness of his Skin, when he is in a Town of *Mexico* sitting at his Door with his Arms a-cross. A Man of his Consequence, so perfect a Creature, would not work

work for all the Treasures in the Universe ; nor by a vile Mechanic Industry expose the Honour and Dignity of his Complexion.

For you must know, that when a Man has attained a certain Merit in *Spain* ; as for instance, when he can add to the Qualifications above-mentioned, that of being the Proprietor of a long Sword, or has learn'd of his Father the Art of fetching a cursed hoarse Sound out of an ill-tuned Guitarre ; he has done working : His Honour is concerned in the Repose of his Members. He that sits upon his Breech ten Hours a Day, is just as good a Man again as he that is idle but five ; for it seems, Honour is to be acquired in a Chair in this Country.

But tho' these invincible Enemies to Labour have the Appearance of a Philosophical Tranquility, yet there is nothing of it in their Hearts ; for they are eternally in Love : They are certainly the cleverest Fel-

Fellows in the World at dying with Passion under their Mistresses Window; and a *Spaniard* without a Cold, must resign all his Pretensions to Gallantry.

They are first and foremost Bigots, and secondly Jealous. They wou'd not upon any Account trust their Wives to the Attacks of a Soldier disabled with Wounds, or to a Magistrate decrepid with Age: But they will lock them up with a fervent Novice that looks meekly down to Earth, or a robust *Franciscan* that raises his sanctified Eyes to Heaven.

They are thoroughly acquainted with the weak side of the fair Sex; they won't let so much as their Heel be seen, for fear they shou'd be caught by the foot; they know the Imagination always goes forwards, and that nothing stops it in its way.

It is every where allow'd, that the Torments of Love are great: They are much greater to the poor

Spa-

Spaniards: The Women indeed relieve their Pains; but they only change one for another, and a long and grievous Remembrance of an extinguished Passion always sticks by them.

They have some pretty Pieces of Politeness that in *France* wou'd be taken for Banter: For Instance, a Captain never canes a common Soldier till he has asked his Leave; and the Inquisition never burns a *Jew* without making Abundance of Excuses to him.

The *Spaniards* that are not burnt are so fond of the Inquisition, that it wou'd really be a pity to rob them of it: I wou'd only have another set up, not against Heretics, but Heresiarchs who ascribe to some idle Monkish Practices, the same Virtues as to the seven Sacraments; who adore every thing which they shou'd only revere; and who are so wondrous devout that they are hardly Christians.

You

You may possibly find Wit and good Sense among the *Spaniards*; but look for none of it in their Books: See but one of their Libraries; Romances on one side, and School Divines on the other: You would swear the Collection had been composed and made by some secret Enemy to human Reason.

The only good Book they have is that which shews the Ridiculousness of all the rest.

They have made vast Discoveries in the new World, and are not yet acquainted with their own Continent: They have Ports in their very Rivers as yet unknown to them; and in their Mountains whole Nations which they never heard of.

They brag that the Sun rises and sets in their Dominions, but they don't tell you that in his Course he meets with nothing belonging to them but waste Champains, and Countries uninhabited.

I shou'd not be displeased, *Usbek*, to see a Letter written to *Madrid* by a *Spaniard* travelling in *France*: I fancy he wou'd take a good hearty Revenge for his own Nation. What a wide Field is here for a Man of a thoughtful stegmatic Turn! I imagine he wou'd begin the Description of *Paris* thus:

There is a House here where they confine Mad-folks: one would think it should be bigger than all the rest of the City: No, the Remedy is very small, considering the Greatness of the Distemper. I suppose the *French*, knowing how much they are run down by their Neighbours, lock up some Mad-men, to make People believe that those who are at Liberty are not so.

There I leave my *Spaniard*. Adieu my dear *Usbek*.

Paris, 17th of the Moon
Saphar, 1715.

LET-

LETTER LXXVI.

Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice.

MOST of the Legislators were Men of limited Capacities, whom Chance raised to the Government of others, and who consulted hardly any thing but their Prejudices and Caprice.

They seem to have been ignorant of the Greatness and Dignity of their Work. They busied themselves in making a Set of boyish Institutions, wherein 'tis true they adapted themselves to meaner Understandings, but disgraced themselves with Men of good Sense.

They plunged themselves into needless Circumstances, and ran into particular Cases; which is the Mark of a narrow Genius, seeing Things only by Parts, and not capable of taking a general View of the Whole.

Some

Some affected to make use of a Language different from the Vulgar; the most absurd thing in nature, in a Composer of Laws: For how shou'd People obey what they do not understand?

They often, without any Necessity, abolished those which they found established to their Hands; thereby involving the People in the Disorders inseparable from Innovation.

It is true, there are such strange Turns rather in the Hearts than the Heads of Men, that it is sometimes necessary to alter certain Laws. But the Case is rare; and when it happens shou'd be touched with a tender Hand: So many Solemnities shou'd be observed in doing it, and so many Precautions used, that the People may of themselves conclude the Laws to be very sacred, when so many Formalities are requisite to abolish them.

Oftentimes they made them too subtil, being led rather by Lo-

gical Distinctions, than by natural Equity. Afterwards they were found too severe; and from a Spirit of Equity it was thought necessary to deviate from them; but this Remedy was a new Evil. Let the Laws be what they will, they shou'd always be adhered to, and looked upon as the public Conscience to which that of private Persons ought always to conform.

It must however be confessed that some of them had a Consideration which shewed great Wisdom; such is their giving to Fathers a very great Authority over their Children: Nothing is a greater Relief to the Magistrate; nothing keeps the public Tribunals so clear of Offenders; in a word, nothing better secures the Peace of a State, wherein Manners always make better Citizens than Laws.

This of all Powers is that which is least abused; it is the most sacred of all Magistracies; it is the only one that does not depend
upon

upon Compacts; nay, it was before them.

It is observed that in those Countries where most Rewards and Punishments are trusted in the Hands of Parents, the Families are best ordered; the Fathers are a Symbol of the Creator of the Universe, who tho' he can lead Men by his Love, yet thinks fit to work upon them also by the Motives of Hope and Fear.

I cannot conclude this Letter, without taking notice to thee of the whimsical Cast of Mind of the French. They are said to have retained an infinite number of things out of the Roman Laws, which are at least Useless, if not worse; but they did not copy after them in the paternal Authority, which was settled by the Romans as the first Lawful Magistracy.

Paris, the 18th of the Moon
Saphir, 1715.

LETTER LXXVII.

*The Chief Eunuch to Usbek,
at Paris.*

Yesterday some *Armenians* brought to the Scraglio a young *Circassian* Slave which they wanted to sell. I carried her into the private Apartments; I undress'd her; I viewed her with the Eyes of a Judge, and the more I viewed her the more Beauties I found in her. A Virgin Bashfulness seemed desirous to hide them from my sight; I perceived with how much Reluctance she obeyed; she blushed to see her self naked even before me, who, exempt from those Passions that can give an Alarm to Virtue, am inanimate under the Empire of that Sex, the Minister of Modesty in the freest Actions, and whose chaste Looks can inspire nothing but Innocence.

As

Persian Letters. 29

As soon as I judg'd her worthy
of Thee, I humbly bent my Eyes
to Earth; I threw over her a
Robe of Scarlet; I put a Ring of
Gold upon her Finger; I prostra-
ted my self before her Feet; I a-
dored her as the Queen of thy
Heart; I paid the *Armenians*; I
buried her from all humane Eyes.
Happy *Usbek*, thou art the Pos-
sessor of more Beauties than are to
be found in all the Palaces of the
East. What Pleasure will it be to
thee at thy return to find thy self
Master of the most charming Wo-
men in *Persia*, and to see the Gra-
ces revive in thy Seraglio as fast as
Time and Possession labour to de-
stroy them.

*From the Seraglio of Fatmé;
the 1st of the Moon Rebi-
ab 1, 1715.*

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LET

LETTER LXXVIII.

Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice.

SINCE I have been in *Europe*, my dear *Rhedi*, I have seen many a different sort of Government: It is not here as in *Asia*, where the Rules of Policy are every where the same.

I have often studied within myself, to find which of all these Governments is most conformable to Reason; and I imagine that to be the most perfect which attains its End with least Difficulty. Consequently, that which conducts Men in a way the most suitable to their Inclinations, is the most perfect.

If the People are as obedient under a mild, as under a severe Government; the former is to be preferred, because it is most conformable to Reason, and that Severity is a foreign Motive.

Be assured, my dear *Rhedi*, that in any State Punishments being more or less cruel, do not create a greater Obedience to the Laws. In a Country where the Punishments are moderate, they are as much dreaded, as where they are tyrannical and inhuman.

Let the Government be gentle or severe, they always punish in several degrees; the Greatness of the Penalty is proportioned to the Greatness of the Crime. Our Imagination moulds it self naturally to the Manners of the Country where we live: A Week's Imprisonment, or a slight Fine makes as great an Impression upon the Mind of a *European*, educated under a mild Government, as the loss of an Arm can intimidate an *Asiatic*. They adapt such a degree of Fear to such a degree of Punishment; and every Man proportions it his own way: A *Frenchman* shall be driven to Despair with strange notions of Infamy upon being condemned to

a Punishment, that would not rob a *Turk* of a quarter of an hour's Sleep.

Besides, I have not found that good Order, Justice and Equity are better observed in *Turkey*, *Persia*, or the *Mogul's* Country, than in the Republics of *Holland*, *Venice*, and even *England*: I do not believe we commit fewer Crimes, or that the Horror of the Punishments frightens us into greater Submission to the Laws.

On the contrary, I think there is a constant Source of Injustice and Confusion in the middle of those very Kingdoms.

Nay, I take the Prince, who is himself the Law, to be less powerful there than elsewhere.

I observe that in those moments of Rigour, there are always tumultuous Motions, in which no body has the Command; and that when once a violent Authority is despised, no body has enough to recover it.

That

That the very Despair of Impunity confirms and encreases the Disorder.

That in such States the Revolts are never inconsiderable; and that there is no medium between Murders and Seditions.

That great Events there have no need of being prepared by great Causes. On the contrary, the least Accident produces the greatest Revolution, which is many times as little expected by those who make as by those who suffer it.

When *Osman* the *Turkish* Emperor was deposed, none of those who were concerned in the Attempt ever thought of committing it. They only begged in a supplicating way to have some Grievance redressed. A Voice, which no body ever knew, came forth from among the Crowd by chance, the Name of *Muslapa* was pronounced, and immediately *Muslapa* was Emperor.

Paris, 12. of the Moon

Rebiab 5. 1715.

and T.

B. S.

LET.

LETTER LXXIX.

Nargum, Envoy from Persia
in Muscovy, to Usbek, at
Paris.

OF all the Nations in the World,
my dear Usbek, none ever ex-
ceeded that of the *Tartars*, either
in Glory or great Conquests. This
People is truly the Lord of the
Universe: all others seem de-
signed to serve them: they are
both the Founders and Destroyers
of Empires: in all Ages they have
given the World proofs of their
Power: in all Ages they have been
the Scourge of Nations.

The *Tartars* have twice conquer-
ed *China*; and still hold it under
their Obedience.

They rule the vast Countries
which form the Empire of *Mogul*.

Masters of *Persia*, they sit upon
the Throne of *Cyrus* and *Gastaspes*.
They have subdued *Muscovy*. Di-
stinguished

stinguished by the Name of *Turks*, they have made immense Conquests in *Europe*, *Asia* and *Africa*; and they bear Dominion over those three Parts of the Universe.

And to speak of Times more remote; from among them issued almost all those Nations which overturned the *Roman Empire*.

What are *Alexander's* Conquests compared with those of *Genghiscan*?

This victorious Nation has only wanted *Historians* to celebrate the Memory of her wonderful Acts.

What immortal Exploits have been buried in Oblivion! What Empires founded by them, which we are at a loss to trace the beginnings of. This warlike Nation, wholly taken up with her present Glory, and sure of Conquering at all times, never took Pains to signalize herself to Posterity, by recording her past Victories.

Moscow, 4th of the Month
Rebiab 1. 1735.

Letter

These sort of Men are above
 of **LETTER LXXX.**
 much as some others
Rice to Ibben, at Smirna

TH^O the *Frensh* talk very much,
 yet there is among them a sort
 of mute Dervises, called *Chartreux*.
 They say they cut out their Tongues
 upon their entering into the Con-
 vent: and it is very much to be
 wished that all the other Dervises
 would cut off everything that their
 Profession renders useless to them.

And now we are speaking of si-
 lent People, there are some much
 more singular than the others, and
 who have a very extraordinary ta-
 lent. These are such as can talk
 without saying any thing, and fig-
 nify a Conversation for two hours
 together, and all the while it shall
 be impossible to observe their
 meaning, and consequently to steal
 from them, or retain a word of
 what they have said.

These.

These sort of Men are adored by the Women: but yet not quite so much as some others, who have been endued by Nature with the agreeable talent of smiling *à propos*, that is every moment; and of receiving every thing they say with approbation and pleasure.

But Those are the top Wits, who can spy a fine thought in every word, and find out a thousand beauties in the most common expression. I know others who have had good success in introducing into the Conversation things inanimate, and in making their fan, Perfumes, their embroidered Coat, their Gold-box, their Cane and their Gloves speak for them. It is no bad way to begin even in the street with distinguishing one's self by the rattling of one's Coach, and by thumping at the door with the Kibbicki: this introduction gives a prepossession in favour of every thing that is to follow: and when the exordium is fine, it renders supportable all the

rest.

non.

38 *Persian Letters.*

nonsense that comes after, but which by good fortune then comes too late.

I can tell thee, these little talents, which are in no esteem among us, are of no small service to those who are so happy as to be Masters of them; and a Man of good sense makes but a poor figure among such People.

*Paris, 6th of the Moon
Rebiab 2. 1745.*

LETTER LXXXI.

Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice.

IF there be a God, my dear *Rhedi*, he must necessarily be Just: for were he not, he would be the most wicked and most imperfect of all Beings.

Justice is a relation of Congruity which is really found between two things: this relation is always
the

the ſame, whatever Being conſiders
it, whether God, or Angel, or laſt-
ly Man.

It is true, Men do not always
ſee theſe relations: May oftentimes
when they do ſee them, they de-
viate from them, and their own
Interſt is what they always ſee beſt.
Juſtice raiſes her voice; but ſhe
has much a do to be heard amidſt
the tumult of the Paſſions.

Men may commit Injuſtice be-
cauſe it is their intereſt to do it,
and they chuſe rather to ſatisfy
themſelves than others. It is al-
ways with an eye to themſelves
that they act: no body is wicked
gratis: he will have ſome reaſon to
ſway him; and that reaſon is al-
ways a reaſon of Interſt.

But it is impoſſible for God ever
to commit any Injuſtice: the mo-
ment we ſuppoſe that he ſees Ju-
ſtice, he muſt neceſſarily follow it:
for as he ſtands in want of nothing,
and is all ſufficient in himſelf; he
would elſe be the moſt wicked of
all.

all Beings, because he would be so without getting by it.

Thus, tho' there were no God, we ought still to love Justice; that is, we should do our endeavour to be like that Being of which we have so lovely an idea, and which, if it existed, must be necessarily Just. Free tho' we should be from the yoke of Religion, yet we ought not to be so from that of Equity.

This, *Rhadi*, makes me believe that Justice is Eternal, and does not depend upon humane conventions; if it did depend upon them, it would be a fatal truth which we should conceal even from our selves.

We are encompassed with Men stronger than we are; they may hurt us a thousand several ways, and generally with impunity. What a comfort is it to us to know that there is in the heart of all these Men an inward principle that stands up in our behalf, and protects us from their violences.

Werec

Were it not for this, we shou'd have reason to be in perpetual dread; we shou'd pass by a Man as by a Lyon; and we shou'd never be one moment secure of our lives, estates, or honour.

These thoughts inflame my indignation against those Doctors, who represent God as a Being that makes a tyrannical use of his Power; who tell us he acts after a manner which we our selves wou'd not, for fear of offending him; who accuse him of all the Imperfections which he punishes in us; and in their contradictory opinions, describe him at one time as a wicked Being, and at another as a Being that hates Wickedness and punishes it.

When a Man examines himself, what a Satisfaction is it to find that he has an upright Heart! This Pleasure, severe as it is, must fill him with rapture: he sees he is a Being as much above those who have it not, as above Tygers and Bears.

Yes,

42 *Persian Letters.*

Yes, *Rhedi*, if I was always sure of strictly following that Equity, which I have before my eyes, I shou'd think my self the first of Men.

Paris, the 1st of the Moon
Gemmedi 1. 1715.

LETTER LXXXII.

Rica to * * *

I Was Yesterday at the Hospital of the Invalids: If I were a Prince, I wou'd rather have been the Founder of that Charity than have won three Victories. There appears in all parts of it the hand of a Great Monarch. I look upon it as the most sacred place upon Earth.

What a Sight is it to behold all these Victims of their Country gathered into one place, who still long only to defend her, and who finding

finding in themselves the same
 Hearts, tho' not the same Strength,
 complain of nothing but the Ina-
 bility they are under of sacrificing
 themselves for her a second time.

What can be more affecting than
 to see these disabled Warriours ob-
 serving in this retirement as exact
 a Discipline as if they were forced
 to it by the presence of an Enemy,
 placing their last satisfaction in this
 Picture of the War, and dividing
 their Hearts and Minds between
 the duties of Religion and those
 of the Military Art?

I would have the Names of those
 that dye for their Country written
 and preserved in Temples in Re-
 gisters, that shou'd be as it were
 the Fountain of Honour and Nobil-
 ity.

Paris, the 15th of the Moon

Gemmadi 1, 1715.

LET-

LETTER LXXXIII.

Usbek to Mirza, at Ispahan.

THOU knowest, Mirza, that some of *Gha-Soliman's* Ministers had formed a design of obliging all the *Armenians* in *Persia* to depart the Kingdom, or turn *Mahometans*, from a belief that our Empire wou'd always be defiled so long as she fostered those Infidels in her bosom.

There had been an end of the *Persian* Greatness, if upon this occasion we had given ear to blind Devotion.

No body knows how the thing came to drop; neither those that made the proposal, nor those that rejected it, were sensible of the fatal consequences: Chance did the business of Reason and good Policy, and saved the Empire from a danger more imminent than it wou'd have

have been in from the loſs of three Battels and of two Cities.

By baniſhing the *Armenians*, they wou'd in one day have rooted out all the Traders, and almoſt all the Artificers in the Kingdom. I am ſure the great *Cba Abas* wou'd rather have had both his Hands cut off than have ſigned ſuch an Order; he wou'd have been of Opinion that in thus ſending to the *Mogul*, and the other Kings of the *Indies*, the moſt induſtrious of his Subjects, he gave them the better half of his Dominions.

The perſecutions which our zealous *Mahometans* raiſed againſt the *Guebres*, conſtrained them to fly in crowds into the *Indies*, and deprived *Persia* of that laborious People ſo much addiſted to Tillage, and who alone by their indefatigable patience were able to conquer the barrenneſs of our Lands.

There was but one thing more left for Bigottry to do, and that was to ruin Ingenuity; and then
the

the Empire wou'd easily fall of it self, and with it of course that very Religion which was thereby intended to be made so flourishing.

If we may reason without prejudice, I know not, *Mirza*, but Variety of Religions may be useful in a State.

It is observed that the Followers of a Religion which is only tolerated are generally more serviceable to their Country than those who are of the established Religion; for being shut out from all honours, and having no way to distinguish themselves but by their Opulence and Wealth, they are naturally led to obtain those Advantages by their labour, and so to embrace the most painful employments in the Society.

Besides, as all Religions contain precepts useful to Society, the more zealously they are observed, the better. Now what can be more likely to animate that Zeal than their Multiplicity?

They

They are so many Rivals that never spare one another's failings. The jealousy descends even to every private member: every one stands upon his guard, and is fearful of doing any thing that may bring a Scandal upon his Sect, and expose it to the contempt and unforgiving censures of its adversaries.

Accordingly it has always been observed that a New Sect in a State, is the surest means of correcting all the abuses of the Old.

It is in vain to say that it is the Prince's Interest not to allow of variety of Religions in his Kingdom. Tho' all the Sects in the World were to get together in it, he wou'd not be at all prejudiced by it; for there is not one but what prescribes Obedience, and preaches up Submission.

I confess Histories are full of Religious Wars: but do not let us take the thing wrong; it was not the diversity of Religions that
occa-

48 *Persian Letters.*

occasioned these Wars; it was the intolerating Spirit of that which thought she had the Power in her Hands.

It was that Spirit of Profelytism which the *Jews* caught of the *Egyptians*; and which from them was communicated like an Epidemical Infection, both to the *Mahometans* and Christians.

In a Word, it was that Spirit of Enthusiasm which in its progress can be looked upon as nothing else but a total Eclipse of humane Reason.

For in short tho' there was nothing of inhumanity in forcing the consciences of others; tho' it occasioned none of those ill effects which spring up from it by thousands: a man must be a fool to offer at it. He that wou'd have me change my Religion does it, no doubt, because he wou'd not change his own if he were to be forced to it: so that he wonders I will not do a thing which perhaps he

he wou'd not do himself for the
Empire of the Universe.

Paris, 26th of the Moon

Gemadi 1715.

LETTER LXXXIV.

Rica 20 ***

IT seems here as if every Family was its own Governour; the husband has but a shadow of Authority over his wife; the father over his children; the master over his slaves; and you need not doubt they always stand up against a jealous husband, a peevish father, or a cross master.

I went to-day to the place where Justice is dispensed. In your way to it you are forced to run the gauntlet of whole numbers of young Shopwomen, that invite you with a deceitful voice. This sight is gay enough, but the next Ob-

jects are very doleful, when you come into the great Halls, where you see nothing but men whose habits are more grave even than their looks. At last you enter into the sacred Place where all the secrets of families are revealed, and where the most private actions are brought out into open light.

There a modest Girl comes and confesses the torments of a virginity too long kept; her conflicts, and her sorrowful resistance: She is so far from being puff'd up with her victory, that she looks every moment for a defeat; and that her father may no longer be ignorant of her necessities, she makes them known to all the world.

An impudent Wife comes next, and sets forth the insults she has done her Husband as so many reasons for being parted from him.

With equal modesty another declares, she is weary of having the title of a wife, without enjoying the benefits of it: She openly reveals

veals the Mysteries buried in the obscurity of marriage: She desires to undergo the examination of Artists, and to be restored by a Decree to all the privileges of virginity. Nay, there are some that dare defy their Husbands, and publicly challenge them to a combat which the Witnesses make so difficult: a trial as disgraceful to the Wife that stands it as to the Husband that is defeated by it.

An infinite number of young women, either ravished or debauched, make mankind even much worse than they really are. This Tribunal rings with nothing but Love. You hear talk of nothing but enraged fathers, abused daughters, perjured lovers, and discontented husbands.

By the Law here in force, any child born in Marriage is concluded to be the Husband's: he may have what reason he will to believe it not to be so; the Law believes it for him; and casts him of his

scruples, and the trouble of a thorough enquiry.

In this Court the voices are taken by majority: but experience has shewn that it wou'd have been a better way to take them by the minority; and it is very natural it shou'd be so; for there are very few just reasoners; and all the world agrees there are false ones now.

*Part, the 1st of the Moon
Gemmadi 2. 1735.*

LETTER LXXXV.

*Rice to ****

THEY say Man is a Sociable Animal. Upon this foot the *French* seem to me to have more of the Man in them than any people in the world: they may be called *Men* by way of excellence; for they

they seem cut out for nothing but Society.

But I have observed among them people who are not only sociable but who may be called an Universal Society of themselves. They multiply themselves into every corner, and in an instant people you the four quarters of a City: one hundred men of this sort shall make a greater show than two thousand other Citizens: they might in the eye of a stranger repair the Devastations of plague or famine. It is a question in the Schools whether one Body can at one instant be in different places; they are a full proof of what the Philosophers propose as a doubt.

They are always in a hurry, having upon their hands the important business of asking every body they meet, where they are going and where they have been.

You can never beat it out of their heads, but that it is a necessary piece of good breeding to vi-

44 Persian Letters.

for the Public every day separately, besides the visit they pay it in gross in places of general assemblies: but as this latter method is too short, these Visits go for nothing in the rules of their Ceremonial.

They wear out more doors with knocking at them than the Winds and Storms. If one were to examine all the Porters Lists, we should every day find their names murdered in a thousand scribbles. They spend their days either in attending upon Funerals, in Compliments of Condolance, or in solicitations of Marriage. The King never grants a Favour to one of his Subjects, but it costs them a Coach or a Chair to with the person for joy. At night they return home to rest themselves after their fatigue, that they may be able next day to resume their laborious task.

One of them died the other day of mere weariness; and this Epitaph was engraved upon his Tomb. Here rests a man that never rested

be-

before. He mourned at five hundred and thirty Burials. He rejoiced at the birth of two thousand six hundred and fourscore children. The Pensions on which he congratulated his Friends at various times amount to two millions six hundred thousand livres *per annum*. The ground he trudged it on foot in town, to nine thousand six hundred furlongs; the walks he took in the Country, to thirty six. His Conversation was amusing; he had a constant Stock of three hundred and sixty five Stories: he was over and above the master even from his youth of a hundred and eighteen Apophthegms extracted from the Ancients, which he brought out whenever he thought fit to shine. He died in the sixtieth Year of his Age. Now, Passenger, I conclude, for when cou'd I tell thee all that he did, and all that he saw?

Paris, 3^d of the Moon
Gemmadi 1. 1715.

LETTER LXXXVI.

Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice.

In Liberty and Equality, reign at *Paris*. Birth, Virtue, may even the greatest Services in War, do not lift a man above the crowd in which he is confounded. Jealousie about rank is here unknown. They say the chief man at *Paris* is he that has the best Horses to his Coach.

A great Man is one that sees the King, speaks to the Ministry, has Ancestors, Debts and Pensions. If with all this he can conceal his idleness under an air of business, or a pretended alacrity after pleasure, he thinks himself the happiest of mortals.

In *Persia* none are Great but those on whom our Monarch bestows some share in the Government. Here there are People that are Great by their Birth, but they have no manner of Interest. Kings
act

act like those nice Artificers who in the execution of their designs always make use of the plainest tools.

Favour is the great Deity of the French. The prime Minister is her High-Priest, and offers her many a Victim. Those who attend upon him are not cloathed in White; sometimes Sacrificers and sometimes Sacrificed, they devote even themselves to their Idol, together with the whole Nation.

Paris, 9th of the Moon

Gemmadi 2. 1715.

LETTER LXXXVII.

Usbek to Ibben, at Smirna.

THE desire of Glory differs in no respect from that instinct which all Creatures have for their own preservation. We seem to extend our Being when we can gain it a place in the memory of other

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men:

men: it is a sort of new life got, which is no less dear to us than that we received from Heaven.

But as all Men are not equally fond of Life, so neither are they equally sensible to the impressions of Glory. That noble Passion is indeed stamp'd upon all our hearts: but imagination and education mould it a thousand various ways.

This difference which is observable between Man and Man, is yet more so between Nation and Nation.

It may be laid down as a maxim, that in every State the desire of Glory encreases and decays with the Liberty of the Subject: Glory is never the companion of Slavery.

A Man of good sense said to me t'other day: We are in many respects much more free in *France* than in *Persia*, and accordingly we are much fonder of Glory. This happy Delusion makes a *Frenchman* perform with pleasure and relish, what your *Sultan* obtains from his
Slaves

Slaves only by setting eternally in their view Rewards and Punishments.

Therefore among us the Prince is jealous for the honour of the meanest of his subjects. There are the most solemn Tribunals for maintaining it: it is the Sacred Treasure of the Nation, and the only one which the King is not Lord of; for he could not be so without running counter to his own interest. So that if a Subject finds himself touch'd in his honour even by his Prince, either by an unjust Preference, or the least mark of Contempt; he immediately leaves his Court and his Service; and retires to his own Estate. He goes on,

The difference between the *French* Troops and yours is, that the one being composed of none but Slaves naturally Cowards, can get over the fear of death only by the terror of greater Torments; which produces in the Soul a new kind of horror, which makes it in a manner stupid;

pid : whereas the others face danger with delight, and banish fear by a satisfaction which is above it.

But the Sanctuary of Honour, Reputation and Virtue seems to be placed in Republics, and in those States where a man may with safety pronounce the word, his Country. At *Rome*, *Athens* and *Sparta*, honour was the only reward for the most signal services. A crown of Oak-leaves or Laurel, a Statue, an Inscription, was an immense return for a Battel won or a City taken.

There a Man that had performed a noble Action, thought himself sufficiently recompensed in the action it self. He could not see one of his Countrymen, without feeling the inward satisfaction of knowing himself his benefactor : he reckoned the number of his services by that of his Fellow-citizens. Any man is capable of doing a piece of service to another man ; but it is somewhat Divine to contribute to the happiness of a whole Society.

But

But must not this noble emulation be entirely extinct in the heart of your *Persians*, among whom employments and dignities flow only from the Monarch's caprice? Reputation and Virtue are there looked upon to be mere imaginary notions, unless attended with the Prince's favour, with which alone they spring up and die. One that has the public Esteem wholly of his side, is not sure of not being dishonoured eternally to-morrow: one day beholds him General of an Army; the next perhaps the Tyrant debases him into his Cook; and he has no other Praise to aim at, but that of dishing up a nice Ragoo.

Paris, the 15th of the Moon

Gemmadi 2. 1715.

LET-

LETTER LXXXVIII.

Usbek to the same, at Smirna.

FROM this general Passion which the *French* Nation have for Glory, there has sprung up in the minds of the people a thing which I know not what to make of, called the point of honour: it is properly the character of every profession; but it is more prevailing among the Soldiers; and there it is the point of honour by way of excellence. It would be very hard to make thee conceive what it is; for we have no clear ideas of it.

Formerly the *French*, and especially the Nobility, followed no other Laws but those of this point of honour. These regulated the whole conduct of their lives; and they were so strict, that it was a penalty worse than death, not only
to

to infringe, but even to evade, the least tittle of them.

When any difference happened, they prescribed only one way of decision, namely the Duel, which cut off all difficulties. But the worst part of the story is, that very often the tryal was made between more parties than were really concerned in the affair.

Let a Man have ever so little acquaintance with another, he was bound to take part in the dispute, and venture his carcass as much as if he were himself in Wrath. He always thought himself honoured with so kind a choice, and so distinguishing a preference: and One that would not have given a man four Pistoles to save him and his whole family from the Gallows, would make no scruple to run the risque of his Life for him a thousand times.

This way of tryal was ill contrived enough: for because one man is stronger or more dextrous than

than another, it does not follow that he has the better cause.

Therefore the Kings have forbidden it upon very severe penalties: but in vain; Honour, which will always have dominion, rebels and owns no Laws.

So that the *French* are in a state of great violence: for on one hand the Laws of Honour oblige a man to revenge himself if he is affronted; and on the other, Justice inflicts the most cruel punishments upon him for doing so. If you follow the Laws of Honour, you lose your head upon a scaffold: if those of Justice, you are driven out for ever from the Society of Men: so that you have only the unhappy choice either of Dying or being unworthy to Live.

Paris, 18th of the Moon

Gemmadi 2. 1715.

L E T.

LETTER LXXXIX.

Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice.

THE Monarch that has reigned so long is no more *. He made millions talk of him while he lived; at his death every body was silent. Firm and courageous in his last moments, he seemed to yield to nothing but Destiny. Thus died the great *Che-Abas* after having filled the whole earth with his fame.

Do not imagine that this great Event put men here only upon making moral reflections. Every one began to think of his own affairs, and to take all advantages upon this change. The King, Great Grandson to the deceased Monarch, being but five years old; a Prince, his Uncle, is declared Regent of the Kingdom.

The

* He died the First of September, 1725.

The late King made a Will, which limited the Regent's Authority. This wise Prince went to the Parliament, and there laying open all the Prerogatives of his Birth, got them to annul the regulations of the late Monarch, who seemed desirous of out-living himself, and of reigning even after his death.

The Parliaments are like those Ruins which we trample under foot, but which yet recal the memory of some Temple famous to the ancient Religion of the Nations. They seldom meddle now in any thing more than the dispensation of Justice; and their Authority will droop every day more and more, unless some unforeseen accident should restore it once more to life and strength. These great Bodies have had the common fate of all humane things; they have submitted to Time, which destroys every thing; to the corruption of manners, which has weakened e-

very

very thing, to the Supreme Power, which has overthrown every thing.

But the Regent, to make himself acceptable to the People, seemed at first to pay a regard to this image of the public Liberty; and as if he intended to raise from earth both the Temple and the Idol, he seemed to respect it as the support of the Monarchy, and the foundation of all lawful Authority.

Part. 2. of the 12th.

Sept. 17 15.

LETTER XC.

Usbek to his Brother Santon,
in the Monastery of Casbin.

I Humble myself before thee, sacred Santon, and throw myself prostrate on the earth: I respect the print of thy footsteps as the apple of my eye. Thy sanctity is so great that

that thou seemest to have the heart of our Holy Prophet: thy Austerities amaze even Heaven it self: the Angels have beheld thee from the pinnacle of Glory, and have cried out: How is it possible he can be yet on Earth, when his Spirit is here with us flying about the Throne which is supported upon the Clouds!

How then shou'd I refrain from paying thee the highest reverence, who have learnt from our Doctors that even the Infidel Dervises have a mark of Holiness which ought to make them venerable to true Believers; and that God has chosen to himself out of all the corners of the earth, some Souls more pure than others, which he has separated from the impious world, to the intent that their fervent prayers and mortifications may arrest his indignation just ready to fall upon so many rebellious Nations!

These Christians tell wonders of their first Santons, who retired by
thousands

thousands into the frightful Desarts of *Thebais*, and had for their Chiefs *Paul*, *Anthony* and *Pacomus*. If what they relate of them be true, their lives are as full of prodigies as those of our most Holy Imaums. They sometimes passed ten whole years at a time without seeing the face of a man: but they dwelt night and day with Dæmons; they were incessantly tormented by those wicked Spirits: they found them in their Beds; at their Tables; no place was secure against them. If all this be true, most Reverend *Santon*, it must be owned that none in the world ever kept worse Company.

The graver sort of Christians look upon these Stories to be a natural Allegory representing the wretchedness of the state of man. In vain do we seek Peace even in the Desert; Temptations still pursue us; our Passions, described under the notion of Dæmons, will never let us rest: those Monsters of the Heart; those illusions of the Mind; those vain fancies of Error

ror and Falshood, appear to us every moment to lead us out of the right path, and attack us in our very Fasts and Hair-cloths; that is even in our greatest Strength.

As for us, most venerable *Santon*, I know that the Messenger of God has chained Satan and cast him into the Abyss; he hath purified the Earth once over-run with his power, and made it an Abode fit for Angels and Prophets.

*(Paris, the 19th of the Moon
Ghabban 1715.)*

LETTER XCI.

Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice.

I Never heard any man talk of the Law of Nations, but he began with enquiring carefully what was the origin of Society; which I think ridiculous. If indeed men formed no Societies; if they avoided

Positive Law.

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avoided and fled from each other: then it would be very natural to enquire the reason, and why they shou'd desire to keep asunder: but as it is, they are even Born in mutual ties to each other: a Son is born near his Father, and continues with him: here is Society and the Cause of Society.

The Law of Nations is more studied in Europe than in Asia: yet the Passions of Princes, the Prejudice of Nations, the Flattery of Authors, have corrupted all the Principles of it.

This Law, as it is now doctor'd, is a Science that instructs Princes how far they may violate Justice without prejudice to their own Interest. A glorious Design! to harden their consciences by reducing iniquity into a system, by laying down rules for the practice, by settling the principles of it, and then drawing conclusions from them!

The unlimited Power of our Sublime Sultans, which has no Rule but

but it self, does not produce more monsters, than this base Art which strives to make justice bend, tho' inflexible.

One wou'd imagine, *Rhedi*, there were two different sorts of Justice: one to regulate the affairs of private persons, which reigns in the Civil Law: the other to compose the differences that arise between People and People; which plays the tyrant in the Law of Nations: as if the Law of Nations were not an Eternal Civil Law, not indeed of a particular Country, but of the World.

I shall be more particular with thee upon this head in another Letter.

Paris, 1st of the Moon

Zilbace, 1716.

LETTER

LETTER XCII.

Usbek to the same.

THE Magistrate ought to do Justice between Citizen and Citizen: every Nation ought to do the same between themselves and another Nation. This second distribution of Justice requires no maxims but what are used in the first.

Between Nation and Nation there is seldom any want of a Third to be Umpire; because the grounds of dispute are almost always clear and easy to be determined. The interests of two Nations are generally so far separated, that it requires nothing but a true Love of Justice to find it out: there is no fear of prevention in ones own cause.

It is not the same with regard to the differences that arise between private persons. As they live in

Society, their interests are so mingled and confounded, and there are so many different sorts of them, that it is necessary for a Third Person to untangle what the covetousness of the parties strives to tie knots in.

There are but two sorts of justifiable Wars: that which we enter into for the repelling an Enemy that attacks us, and that which we undertake in defence of an Ally that is attacked.

There wou'd be no equity in making war upon a Prince's private Quarrel, unless the Crime were of that heinous nature as to deserve the death of the Prince or People that committed it. Thus, a Prince shou'd not make war, for being denied some Honour which was his right, or for any disrespect to his Ambassadors, or the like trifles: no more than a private man ought to kill one that refuses him the wall. The reason is, that as a Declaration of War is an act of Justice wherein the

the punishment shou'd always bear proportion to the fault; we shou'd consider, whether the person we declare war against, is worthy of Death. For to make war upon any One, is to seek to punish him with death.

The most severe Act of Justice in the Law of Nations is War; its end being the destruction of Society.

Reprisals are of the second degree. To proportion the penalty to the crime is a method which no Tribunal cou'd ever help observing.

A third Act of Justice is to deprive a Prince of the advantages he reaps from our commerce, still measuring the punishment by the offence.

The fourth Act of Justice, which ought to be the most frequent, is a renunciation of the alliance of the People against whom we have cause of complaint. This penalty is an-

swerable to that of Banishment in common Tribunals, which cuts off the Criminal from Society. So a Prince whose Alliance we renounce, is thereby cut off from our Society, and is no longer one of our Members.

There can be no greater affront done to a Prince than to renounce his Alliance, and no greater honour than to court it. There is nothing among Men more glorious nor more useful, than to have Others concerned and watchful for their Preservation.

But in order to make an Alliance Binding, it must be just: so that an Alliance made between two Nations to oppress a third, is not lawful, and may honourably be broke.

Neither does it become the dignity and reputation of a Prince to enter into an alliance with a Tyrant. We read, that a certain *Egyptian* King sent to reprehend the King of *Samos* for his cruelty and tyranny,

tyranny, calling upon him to amend: and upon his not doing it, he gave him to know that he abjured his friendship and alliance.

The Right of Conquest is no Right at all. A Society can never be founded upon any thing but the free consent of all the Members: if it is destroyed by Conquest, the People are thereby freed from their old engagements: it does not make a new Society; and if the Conqueror goes about to do it, he acts the Tyrant.

As to Treaties of Peace, they are never lawful when they ordain a cession or reparation more considerable than the damage done: this is mere violence, and may at any time be lawfully set aside: unless in order to recover what we have lost, we are obliged to have recourse to such violent methods as will create mischiefs greater than the advantage sought after.

This, my dear Rhodé, is what I call the Law of Nations, which

may be called more properly the
Law of Reason.

Paris, the 4th of the Moon
Zilchagé, 1716.

LETTER XCH.

*The Chief Eunuch to Usbek,
at Paris.*

THERE are arriv'd here a great
many yellow women out of the
Kingdom of *Visapour*: I have
bought one for thy brother the Go-
vernour of *Mazenderan*, who about
a month ago sent me his sublime
Command: and a hundred To-
mans.

I have the more skill in women
because they do not surprize me,
and my eyes are not disturbed by
the motions of my heart.

I never saw so regular and so
compleat a beauty: her sparkling
eyes enliven her whole face, and
heighten

heighten the beauty of a complexion that may shame all the Charms of *Circassia*.

The chief Eunuch of a Merchant of *Ispahan* wou'd have purchased her from me: but she disdainfully shun'd his sight, and seemed to court mine; as tho' she wou'd have me understand that a vile Merchant was not worthy of her, and that she was destin'd for a more illustrious Husband.

I confess to thee I am ravished with a secret delight when I think of the charms of this lovely creature: I fancy I see her entering into thy Brother's Seraglio: I please my self with imagining the surprise of all his women: the imperious vexation of some; the silent but more mournful affliction of others; the malicious pleasure of those who have no further hopes; and the enraged ambition of those who have hopes still.

I am travelling from one end of the Kingdom to t'other to change

80 *Persian Letters.*

the face of the whole Scraglio :
what passions shall I provoke ! what
fears, what troubles am I prepa-
ring.

But yet all this inward Uneasiness
shall not break the outward tran-
quillity : great revolutions shall be
hid in the bottom of the heart ;
their vexation shall be kept in, and
their joys restrained : their obedi-
ence shall be no less exact nor the
Rules less severe : outward Mildness
and Content shall shew its self even
in inward Rage and Despair.

We observe that the more wo-
men we have in charge, the less
trouble they give us. A greater ne-
cessity of pleasing ; less conveni-
ence for caballing ; more examples
of submission : all this strengthens
their chains : one is a constant watch
upon the proceedings of another :
they seem to labour in conjunction
with us to make themselves more
dependent : they do almost half our
duty for us, and open our eyes if
we are in danger of being deluded.

In

In short, they are eternally stirring up their Master against their Rivals, not seeing that it is their own turn to be punished next.

But all this, Magnificent Lord, all this is nothing without the Master's presence. What can we do with that vain phantom of authority which we have, for it is impossible to communicate the whole? We but faintly represent one half of thy self: we can shew them nothing but an odious severity. Thou minglest fear with hope; more absolute when thou carest than when thou threatenest.

Return then, Mighty Lord, return to these Mansions, and shew the marks of thy Sovereignty. Come and give ease to passions almost grown desperate: come and remove all excuse for going astray: come and quiet Love, who begins to murmur; and make Duty it self agreeable: come, lastly, and relieve thy faithful Eunuchs from a bur-

den which grows every day heavier
and heavier.

*From the Seraglio of Ispahan the 8th
of the Moon Zilhage, 1716.*

LETTER XCIV.

*Usbek to Hasssein Dervise of
the Mountain of Jaron.*

O THOU, most knowing Dervise, whose curious mind is resplendent with so many parts of Science, hearken to what I am going to say to thee.

There are Philosophers here who indeed have not attained to the summit of the Oriental Wisdom: they have never been caught up to the Throne of Light: they have neither heard the ineffable words resounding from Consorts of Angels; nor felt the raptures of a Divine Fury: but left to themselves, deprived

deprived of holy aids, they follow in silence the footsteps of humane Reason.

Thou canst not imagine how far this Guide has led them. They have dived into *Chaos*, and by a plain mechanism unfolded the order of the Divine Architecture. The Author of Nature gave motion to Matter: there required no more to produce this miraculous variety of Effects which we behold in the Universe.

Let common Legislators propose Laws for the regulation of humane Societies; Laws as subject to change as the minds of those who contrive them, and of the Nations that obey them: these Men talk of none but Laws, general, immutable, eternal; which are observ'd without any the least exception, with infinite order, regularity and readiness, in the immense Expanse.

And what dost thou think, O Man Divine, that these Laws are? Thou perhaps imaginest that enter-
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ing into the Councils of the Eternal, thou shalt be struck with amazement at the sublimity of deep Mysteries: thou despairest beforehand of Conceiving: thou expectest only to Admire.

But thou wilt soon be undeceived: they do not dazzle us with a false respect: their simplicity has made them long misunderstood: and 'twas not till after studious reflections that their fruitfulness and extensiveness came to be found out.

The first Law is, that all Bodies tend in right lines, unless they meet with some obstacle that turns them out of their way: and the second, which is but the result of the former, is, that all Bodies which turn round a Centre, seek to fly from it, because the further it is from that Center the more the line which it moves in approaches to a right Line.

Here

Here, sublime Dervise, is the Key of Nature. Here are fruitful Principles from which they draw consequences beyond all imagination, as I will shew thee in a particular Letter.

The knowledge of five or six Truths has filled their Philosophy with wonders, and has enabled them to perform more stupendous miracles than are related of our Holy Prophets.

For in short, I am satisfied there is none of our Doctors but would have been strangely puzzled, if he had been required to weigh in a balance all the Air which surrounds the Earth; or to measure all the water which falls in a year upon its surface; or that would have known what to answer, if he had been asked how many leagues Sound travels in an hour, or what time a Ray of Light takes in its passage from the Sun to Us? How many fathom it is from hence to *Saturn*? What Curve a Ship must be cut into, to be

be the best failure that can possibly be made?

Perhaps if some Divine man had embellished the works of these Philosophers with lofty and sublime expressions; if he had filled them with bold figures and mysterious Allegories; he would have composed a Work inferior to nothing but the Holy Alcoran.

Yet if I may venture to tell thee my real thoughts; I am not fond of the figurative style. There is in our Alcoran a vast number of puerile things, which still appear to me to be what they are, notwithstanding they are heightened by the force and energy of the language: at first it seems as if the Inspired Books are nothing but the divine ideas expressed in humane language: on the contrary, in our sacred Writings, we find the language of God, and the ideas of Men; as if out of an admirable Caprice, God had dictated the words, and Man found the thoughts.

Thou

Thou wilt ſay, perhaps, I ſpeak too freely of what is ſo Holy among us: thou wilt take it to be the effect of the licentiousneſs tolerated in this Country. No, thanks be to Heaven, my Mind has not corrupted my Heart; and as long as I live, *Holy* ſhall be my Prophet.

Paris, the 15th of the Moon
Chahban, 1716.

LETTER XCV.

Usbek to Ibben, at Smirna.

THERE is not in the world a Country where Fortune is ſo inconstant as in this. There happen every ten years revolutions which plunge the rich man into beggary, and exalt the poor man with rapid wings to the height of riches. The one is amazed at his poverty; the other, at his wealth. The new Rich Man admires the Wiſdom of Provi-

Providence; the poor Man, the blind caprice of Destiny.

Those that collect the Tributes swim in the midst of Treasures: there are very few *Tantalusses* among them: yet they come into this employment from the lowest wretchedness: they are despised like the dirt while they are poor; when they are rich they are esteemed well enough: and they stick at nothing to obtain this esteem.

They are at present in terrible circumstances. There is a Court just established called *The Chamber of Justice*, because it is to strip them of their ill-gotten Estates. They can neither transfer nor conceal their wealth; for they are obliged to make an exact confession of it upon pain of death: so that they are forced to pass a very narrow strait, I mean between their lives and their money. To heighten their good fortune, there is a Minister well known for his Wit that honours them with his raillery, and

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is pleasant upon all the deliberations of the Council. We very seldom hear of a Minister of State inclined to make the People at all merry ; and we ought to own our obligations to this, for undertaking it.

The Body of Footmen is of more honour in *France* than any where else ; it is a Seminary of Great Men ; it fills up the vacancies that happen in all the other States. The members of it presently take the places of all Ministers that prove unfortunate, all Magistrates that are ruined, or Gentlemen that drop in War ; and when they are not sufficient to fill them in their own persons, they lift up great Families by means of their Daughters, who are like a sort of Dung, which fattens Lands that are otherwise stony and dry.

My dear *Ibben*, I am never weary of admiring Providence in her method of distributing Riches : if she had granted them only to good men, they would not have been suffi.

sufficiently distinguished from Virtue it self, and we should never have known the vileness of them. But when we examine what sort of people are most loaded with them; by despising the Rich, we at length come to have a contempt for Riches.

Paris, 26th of the Moon
Maharham, 1717.

LETTER XCVL

Rica to Rhedi, at Venice.

THE strange changes of Fashion among the *French* are surprizing. They have forgot how they dress'd last Summer; they know less how they shall dress next Winter: but above all it is impossible to conceive how much it costs a Husband to keep his Wife in fashion.

What would it signify to give thee an exact description of their Habit and Ornaments? A new fashion

ſhion would ſpoil my account, as it does their cloaths; and before thou haſt received my Letter, all would be altered.

A woman that leaves *Paris* to ſpend ſix months in the Country, comes home as antiquated as if ſhe had been there thirty years. The Son does not know the picture of his own Mother, ſo ſtrange the dreſs ſhe was drawn in is now grown: he takes it to be the picture of ſome *American*, or only a grotesque crotchet of the Painter's.

Sometimes the Head-dreſs riſes by degrees to a vaſt height, and then a ſudden revolution takes it down again as faſt: there was a time when its immense loſineſs left the face of a woman in the middle of her body. At another time, the feet were got thither: the Heels were a ſort of pedestals that raiſed the woman into the air. Who will believe it? the Architects are often forced to raiſe, lower and widen the doors as the women's dreſs either

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ther shrinks or enlarges it self; and the rules of their Art are become subject to their fancies: sometimes you shall see a prodigious quantity of patches upon their faces; and next day they all disappear again. Formerly the Women had shapes and teeth: now they don't mind them. In this changeable Nation, let the Critic say what he will, the Daughter is formed differently from the Mother.

It is the same with their Manners and way of living, as with their Fashions: The *French* change their customs with the age of their King. I know not but their Monarch might even make this very people grave, if he went about it. The Prince communicates his character to the Court, the Court to the City, the City to the Country. The King's Soul is a Mould which gives shape to all the rest.

is, *8th of the Month*
Paraphar, 1757.

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LETTER XCVII.

Rica to the same.

I Wrote to thee t'other day about the prodigious inconstancy of the *French* in their fashions : Yec it is inconceivable to what a degree they are fond of them ; they are the rules by which they judge of every thing done by other Nations : they call every thing to this standard : every thing foreign appears to them ridiculous. I confess to thee I cannot make this madness for their Customs agree at all with the inconstancy with which they change them almost daily.

When I tell thee that they despise every thing Foreign, I speak only of Trifles : For in things of consequence, they appear diffident of themselves, even to their own lessening. They seem very ready to own that other Nations are wiser, provided they are but allowed to be

be the best dressed. They are willing to subject themselves to the Laws of a Rival People, if the *French* Perruke-makers may but be the Legislators as to the shape of foreign perrukes. Nothing appears to them so glorious, as to see their Cooks govern from North to South; and the Decrees of their Firewomen observed in all the Toilettes in *Europe*.

With these noble advantages, what signifies it if their good sense be imported to them from Abroad, and if they do borrow from their Neighbours every thing that concerns both their Political and Civil Government.

Who would think that the most ancient and potent Kingdom in *Europe* should have been governed for above ten Ages by Laws not calculated for them? Had the *French* been conquered, it had been natural enough: But they are the Conquerors.

They

They have deserted the old Laws made by their first Kings in the general Assemblies of the Nation: and what is most singular, the *Roman* Laws which they have adopted in their room, were partly made and partly collected by Emperors who were contemporary with their own Legislators.

And to make their theft complete, and that they might get all their Good sense at other peoples cost, they have naturalized all the Constitutions of Popes; and therefore made a new part of their Law; a new kind of slavery.

It is true, of latter days they have reduced into writing some statutes of Cities and Provinces; but they are almost every one borrowed from the *Roman* Law.

This multitude of adopted and naturalized Laws is so great, that it almost equally oppresses both Justice and the Judge. But these Volumes of Laws are nothing in comparison

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parison of that dreadful Army of Glossers, Commentators, Compilers; people as weak in thought, as strong in numbers.

This is not all. These foreign Laws have introduced formalities, which are a scandal to humane Reason. It would be a difficult question to resolve, whether Formality did most mischief by creeping into Law or into Physic: whether she has committed most devastation under the Lawyers Gown, or under the Physicians broad-brim'd hat; and whether she has ruined more people in the one, than she has killed in the other.

Paris, 12th of the Moon
Saphar, 1717.

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LETTER XCVIII.

Usbek to * * *

THEY talk of nothing here but the *Constitution*. I went to other day into a House, where the first man I cast my eyes upon was a great fat man with a ruddy countenance, that was saying with a loud Voice: I have published my Mandate: I sha'n't trouble my self to answer all your objections: but read that same Mandate of mine; there you will find I have resolved all your scruples. I am sure I was forced to sweat hard to make it, says he, wiping his forehead: I had occasion for all my Learning, and was forced to read many a *Latin* Author. I believe so, said one that stood by, for 'tis a curious piece; and I defy the Jesuit that comes to see you so often, to write a better. Well read it then, replied he, and you will be let more
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into these matters in a quarter of an hour, than if I were to talk to you two hours together. Thus he tried to avoid entering into Conversation, and exposing his sufficiency. But finding himself close pressed, he was forced to come out of his intrenchments; and he began to lay down Theologically a good handsome number of Imperinences, which were all backed by a Dervise who stood up stiffly for every one of them. When two men that were there denied him any principle, he presently cried out, Nay, but it is certain; we have so adjudged it, and we are infallible Judges. And how came you to be infallible Judges, said I? Do not you perceive, said he, that the Holy Ghost enlightens us! 'Tis very lucky that it is so, answered I; for if you always talk as you have done all this day, I am sure you have need enough of Light.

Paris, 18th of the Moon
Rebiab 1, 1717.

LETTER

LETTER XCIX.

Usbek to Ibben, at Smirna.

THE most potent States in *Europe*, are the Empire, *France*, *Spain*, and *England*. *Italy* and good part of *Germany* are divided into a great number of petty States whose princes are, properly speaking, the Martyrs of Sovereignty. Our glorious Sultans have more Wives, than most of those petty Princes have Subjects. Those of *Italy*, who are not so united as those of *Germany*, are more to be pitied: their Dominions are open like so many Caravanserais, where they are obliged to lodge their first comers: they are therefore under a necessity of adhering to some great Prince, and giving him a share rather of their Fears than their Friendship.

Most of the Governments in *Europe* are Monarchic; or rather, called so: for I know not whether

there were ever any such in reality: at least it is impossible they shou'd subsist long: it is a state of violence, and always falls into a Despotical Government or into a Republic: The Power can never be equally divided between the Prince and the People: the equilibrium is too difficult to preserve: the Power must diminish on one side, while it encreases on the other: but the advantage generally happens on the side of the Prince, who is at the head of the Armies.

And accordingly the Power of the *European* Kings is very great, and one may venture to say, as great as they please to make it: but they do not stretch it so far as our *Sultans*: first, because they wou'd not shock the Manners and Religion of their Subjects. Secondly, because it is not their interest to carry it so far.

Nothing brings down a Prince so near to the condition of his Subjects, as exercising an extravagant power.

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power over them: nothing exposes them so much to the turns and caprices of fortune.

The custom they use of causing all that offend them to be put to death upon the least signal, overthrows the proportion which ought to be kept between the Faults and the Punishments, which is in a manner the Soul of a State, and the Harmony of an Empire; and this proportion being scrupulously observed by the Christian Princes, gives them an infinite advantage above our Sultans.

A Persian who either by imprudence or misfortune, has drawn upon himself the displeasure of his Prince, is sure of death: the least fault or the least caprice brings him into this case. But if he had attempted the life of his Sovereign; if he had gone about to betray his strong Towns to the Enemy; he cou'd still but lose his life: therefore he runs no greater risque in this last case than in the first.

So that upon the least displeasure finding death unavoidable, and having nothing worse to fear; he is naturally inclined to disturb the peace of the State, and to conspire against his Sovereign; this being the only refuge he has left.

It is not so with the Great Men in *Europe*, who lose nothing by being disgraced, but the good-will and favour of their Prince: they retire from Court, and think of nothing but enjoying a quiet life and the advantages of their birth. As they seldom forfeit their lives but for High-Treason, they are fearful of being drawn into it, considering how much they have to lose, and how little to gain: which is the reason that here we seldom see Rebellions, or Kings destroyed by violent deaths.

If in the unlimited Authority our Princes possess, they did not use so many precautions to guard their lives, they wou'd none of them live a day; and if they did not

not keep in pay an infinite number of troops to tyrannize over the rest of their Subjects, their Empire wou'd not subsist a month.

It is not above four or five ages ago, that a King of *France* took Guards, contrary to the custom of those days, to secure himself from some ruffians that a petty Prince in *Asia* had sent to murder him: till then, Kings had lived quiet in the midst of their Subjects, like Fathers in the midst of their Children.

Tho' the Kings of *France* cannot of their own motion take away the life of any of their Subjects, like our Sultans; yet they have Power of Mercy towards all Criminals. It is sufficient that a man has been happy enough to see the August Countenance of his Sovereign, to blot out all his crimes. These Monarchs are like the Sun, who cheers every thing with warmth and life.

Paris, 8th of the Moon

Rebiab 2, 1717.

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LETTER

LETTER C.

Usbek to the same.

TO pursue the thought of my last Letter, hear what a good sensible *European* said to me t'other day.

The worst method the Princes of *Asia* cou'd take, is to hide themselves as they do. They think to win the more respect by so doing: but they win respect for the Royalty and not for the King; and fasten the minds of their Subjects to a certain Throne, and not to a certain Person.

That invisible Power which holds the Government, is always the same with regard to the people. Tho' ten Kings, whom they know only by name, have their throats cut one after another; they feel no difference: it is just as if they were governed successively by Spirits.

If the detestable Parricide of our Great King *Henry* the Fourth had struck his knife into the heart of an *Indian* King; becoming then immediately master of the Royal Signet and of an immense Treasure, which wou'd seem to have been heap'd up on purpose for him, he would have taken peaceable possession of the reins of the Empire, and no man wou'd ever have thought of enquiring for his King, or his Family and Children.

We wonder there should never happen any changes in the Eastern Governments; and why is it? but because they are tyrannical and terrible.

Changes can never be brought about, but either by the Prince, or by the People: but there, the Prince will be sure never to desire any such thing, because in the high degree of power he enjoys, he has every thing he can wish for; so that any change must be to his prejudice.

As to the Subjects, if any of them forms a design, he cannot execute it upon the State: to do that he must have some force immediately to counterbalance a formidable power, and which is always the only one: he wants Time to do this, as well as Means: but he can strike at the source of all this power; and for that he needs nothing but an Arm and a Moment.

The Murderer mounts the Throne, while the Monarch falls down from it, and expires at his feet.

A Malcontent in *Europe* contrives to hold some private intelligence; to go over to the Enemy; to get some strong place into his hands; to raise some vain murmurs among his fellow-subjects. A Malcontent in *Asia* aims directly at the Prince, surprizes, strikes, destroys; he blots out his very memory; in an instant, both Slave and Lord; in a moment, Usurper and Lawful.

Wretched

Wretched the King who has but one head ; he seems to collect all his power upon that, only to shew the first ambitious Villain, the place where to strike at it and sieze it.

Paris, the 17th of the Moon

Rebiab 2. 1717.

LETTER CL.

To the same.

ALL the Nations in *Europe* are not under equal subjection to their Princes : for instance, the impatient humour of the *English* never gives the King leisure to extend his authority : submission and obedience are virtues they very little value themselves upon. They hold very extraordinary opinions about this article. According to them, there is but one tie that has any effect upon men, which is that of Gratitude : a husband, a wife, a father,

a son, are bound to each other by nothing but either the Love they bear to each other, or mutual services and benefits: and these various motives of acknowledgment are the origin of all Kingdoms and all Societies.

But if a Prince, instead of endeavouring to make his subjects happy, studies only how to oppress and destroy them; the foundation of obedience ceases; nothing ties, nothing obliges them to him; and they return to their natural liberty. They maintain that no unlimited power can be lawful, because it could never have a lawful beginning. For we cannot, say they, give to another more power over us than we have over our selves: for instance, we cannot touch our own lives; no man upon earth therefore, conclude they, can have such a power.

High-Treason, according to them, is nothing but a Crime committed by the Weaker against the Stronger, by

By disobeying him, let him disobey him in what way he will. And accordingly the People of *England*, happening to prove the stronger in a contention with one of their Kings, declared it to be High-Treason in a Prince to make war upon his Subjects. They have very good reason therefore to say, that the Precept in their Alcoran, which enjoyns obedience to the Powers, is not very hard to follow, since they cannot help following it if they would; in as much as it is not to the most virtuous that they are bound to submit, but to the Strongest.

The *English* tell you, that one of their Kings having overcome and taken a Prince that rebelled against him, and disputed the Crown with him, and upbraiding him with his treachery and perfidiousness: It has been decided but a moment, answered the unfortunate Prince, which of Us two is the Traytor.

A Usurper declares all to be Rebels, that have not oppressed their Country like himself: and thinking there are no Laws where he sees no Judges, forces respect as to the Decrees of Heaven, to the blind Caprice of Chance and Fortune.

Paris, 20th of the Moon

Rebiab 2. 1717.

LETTER CH.

Rhedi to Usbek, at Paris.

THOU talkest much to me in one of thy Letters, of the Sciences and Arts cultivated in the West: thou wilt take me for a Barbarian, in what I am going to say: but I am doubtful whether the advantage drawn from them, be a sufficient recompence to mankind for the ill use which they are daily put to.

I have heard that the single invention of Bombs, cost all the Nations in *Europe* their liberty. The Princes finding it no longer safe to trust the guard of Towns to the Citizens, who at the first Bomb would have surrendered; thence made an excuse for keeping on foot great Bodies of regular Troops, with which they afterwards enslaved their Subjects.

Thou knowest that since the invention of Gun-powder, there is no place impregnable: that is to say, *Usbek*, there is no longer any *Asylum* upon earth against injustice and violence.

I often tremble for fear at last some invention will be found out of a shorter way to destroy mankind, and to depopulate whole Nations and whole Kingdoms.

Thou hast read the Historians; reflect seriously upon them; thou wilt find that almost all Monarchies were founded upon nothing but the ignorance of the Arts, and
were

Persian Letters.

were destroyed only by their being too much cultivated. The ancient Empire of *Persia* is a domestic instance to us of this truth.

I have not been long in *Europe* : but I have often heard wise men talk of the ravages of Chymistry : it seems to be a fourth scourge which ruins mankind, and destroys them in particular, but continually ; while War, Plague and Famine cut them off in general, but by fits.

What have we gained by the Compass, and the discovery of so many new Nations, but a communication of their distempers rather than of their Riches ? Gold and Silver were before established by a general agreement to be the price of all Merchandizes ; and the measure of their value, because those mettals were scarce and unfit for all other uses : what benefit was it to us then, that they should grow more common, and that to shew the value of any commodity, we should have two or three Signs instead

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instead of one ? This was only an Inconvenience.

But on the other hand, this invention has been terribly pernicious to the Countries newly discovered. Whole Nations have been massacred : and those who have escaped death, are reduced to so cruel a slavery, that the very relation makes the Mussulmans tremble.

Happy ignorance of the Sons of *Mahomet* ! charming simplicity, beloved by our Holy Prophet ! thou always recallest to my mind the plain honesty of ancient times, and the peace which dwelt in the hearts of our first fathers !

Venice, 2d of the Moon
Rhamazan, 1717.

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LETTER CIII.

Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice.

EITHER thou dost not think what thou sayest; or else thou actest better than thou thinkest. Thou hast left thy Country for the sake of knowledge, and thou despisest all instruction: thou travellest for thy accomplishment into a Country where the polite Arts are cultivated, and thou lookest upon them to be pernicious. What shall I say to thee, *Rhedi*? I agree with thee more than thou dost with thy self.

Hast thou thorowly reflected upon the barbarous and wretched state to which the loss of the Arts would sink us? There is no need of imagining it; we may see it. There are yet Nations upon earth, among whom an Ape tolerably well taught, might live with honour: he would be much upon a level with the rest of the inhabitants: they

they would not even think him an odd fellow, nor at all whimsical : he would pass muster as well as any of them, and for aught I know be distinguished above the rest by his politeness.

Thou sayest that the Founders of Empires have almost generally been ignorant of the Arts. I do not deny but that a barbarous Nation may like an impetuous Torrent over-spread the face of the earth, and with their savage Armies rush in upon the best governed Kingdoms : but take heed ; they either learnt the Arts from the people they conquered, or obliged that people to practise them for them : without this their power would have gone away like the grumbling of Thunder and Tempests.

Thou art afraid, thou sayest, some other way of destruction will be found out more terrible than that already in use. No ; if a fatal invention should be hit upon, it would quickly be forbidden by the Law
of

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of Nations, and the unanimous consent of Mankind would soon crush such a discovery : it is not the interest of Princes to make conquests by such methods : they want Subjects, and not Lands.

Thou complainest of the invention of Gun-powder and Bombs : thou art grieved that now there is no place impregnable ; that is, indeed, thou art grieved that wars should be sooner determined now than they were formerly.

Thou must have observed, from thy reading in History, that since the invention of Gun-powder, Battels are much less bloody than they used to be, because now there is hardly ever any such thing as close fights.

And tho' in some one particular case an Art should be prejudicial ; is that a sufficient reason for rejecting it ? Dost thou believe, *Rhedi*, that the Religion which our Holy Prophet brought down from Heaven, is pernicious, because it shall

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one day serve to confound the perfidious Christians?

Thou fanciest that the Arts make People effeminate, and thereby occasion the fall of Empires. Thou mentionest the ruin of that of the Ancient *Persians*, which was the effect of their luxury: but this instance is far from being conclusive; since the *Greeks*, who subdued them, cultivated the Arts with infinitely more diligence, than they did.

When we say the Arts render men effeminate, we certainly do not speak of the smaller number who apply themselves that way; since they are never in idleness, which of all vices softens the courage the most.

We therefore must mean only those who enjoy the fruits of those Arts: but as in a well-governed State, those who enjoy the conveniences of one art are obliged to cultivate another, upon pain of falling into a scandalous poverty: it follows

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follows that idleness and luxury are incompatible with the Arts.

Of all the Cities in the world, I know not but *Paris* is the most sensual, and refines the most upon her pleasures; and yet perhaps no people live harder. To entertain one man in luxury, a hundred others must labour incessantly. A woman takes it in her head to appear at an Assembly in such a dress: from that moment fifty Artificers must bid adieu to sleep, and hardly give themselves time to eat or drink. She commands, and is obeyed more suddenly than our Great Monarch, because Interest is the most powerful Monarch upon earth.

This earnest application to labour, this thirst of getting wealth, reaches from the meanest Artificers to the Greatest men in the Kingdom: no body cares to be poorer than him that was once below him. You shall see at *Paris* a man who has where-withal to live upon till the day of Judgment, working night and day,
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and venturing his life to get, as he will tell you, a Subsistence.

The same Spirit governs the whole Nation: you see nothing but Labour and Industry: where then is the effeminate people thou so much talkest of?

I will suppose, *Rbedi*, that in some Kingdom no other Arts were allowed but such as are absolutely necessary in the manuring of the Lands, which yet are very numerous; and that all those were banished, which served only to Pleasure or Curiosity: I will maintain it, that Kingdom wou'd be the most miserable in the whole world.

Tho' the Inhabitants shou'd be masters of so much Philosophy as to deny themselves so many things which are for their conveniency; the people wou'd daily fall to decay, and the State wou'd become so weak, that any little Potentate wou'd be able to conquer it.

I might here enter into a long discussion, to prove to thee that the revenues of the Subjects wou'd be almost absolutely at an end, and consequently those of the Prince: there wou'd be hardly any of those mutual relations, which are between Citizens of the same faculty: that circulation of wealth, and that encrease of income which arises from the dependance of the Arts one upon another, wou'd absolutely cease: every man wou'd depend only upon the revenue of his Land, and raise but just so much upon it as was necessary to keep him from starving: but as that is not the hundredth part of the Revenue of the Kingdom, it must follow, that the number of Inhabitants wou'd decrease in proportion, and that there wou'd be but a hundredth part of them left.

Consider what a great article the revenues of Industry will appear. An estate in land brings into its master but the twentieth part of
its

its value annually: but a Painter with a Guinea's worth of Colours shall draw a Picture that will fetch fifty. The same may be said of Goldsmiths, workers in Wool and Silk, and all manner of Artificers.

From all which, *Rhedi*, we are to conclude, that in order to make a Prince powerful it is necessary his Subjects shou'd live in affluence: he shou'd study to procure them all manner of superfluities with as much attention, as to furnish them with necessaries for Life.

Paris, 14th of the Moon
Chalval, 1717.

LETTER CIV.

Rica to Ibben, at Smirna.

I Have seen the young Monarch:
his life is very precious to his
Subjects: it is no less so to all *Europe*
VOL. II. F upon

upon account of the great confusions his death might produce. But Kings are like Gods; and while they are alive, we are to suppose them Immortal. His countenance is full of majesty, but beautiful: a fine education concurs with a happy disposition to promise already a Great Prince.

They say we can never judge of the character of these Western Kings till they have passed thro' the two great Tryals, their Mistress and their Confessor: we shall soon see both endeavouring to win upon the mind of this; and great contentions will arise about it. For under a young Prince, those two Powers are always rivals: but they agree and unite under an Old one. With a young King, the Dervise has a very difficult part to act: the King's Strength is his weakness: but the Other triumphs equally both in his weakness and strength too.

When I first came into *France*, I found the late King absolutely governed

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verned by Women: and yet considering his age I believe ne'er a Monarch in the Universe had less occasion for them. I one day overheard a woman saying: We must do something for that young Colonel: his Valour I am thoroughly acquainted with: I will speak about it to the Ministry. Another said: It is strange that young *Abbé* shou'd be forgot: he must be a Bishop: he is a man of birth, and I can answer for his Manners. Yet thou must not imagine, that the women who talked at this rate were the Prince's Favourites: they never spoke to him twice in their lives, which yet is a very easy thing to do with these *European* Princes. But the reason is, there is hardly one who has any employment at Court, in *Paris*, or in the Provinces, that has not some woman thro' whose hands all the favours and sometimes all the injustice he can do, always pass. These women are all fastened together by mutual ties, and

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form a kind of Republick of which every member, always active, succours and assists the other upon any occasion that offers : it is in a manner a State within a State : and one that is at Court, at *Paris*, or in the Provinces, and sees the Ministry, Magistrate and Prelates acting in their several Spheres, without knowing the women that govern them; is like a man that sees a Machine playing, but is all the while ignorant of the springs that move it.

Dost thou fancy, *Ibben*, that a woman consents to be mistress to a Minister of State, for the pleasure of lying with him? thou art quite Out : It is to have an opportunity of presenting him every morning with five or six petitions : and the goodness of their disposition appears in their zeal for doing good to a number of unhappy People, who procure them a hundred thousand livres a year.

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Perſian Letters. 125

We complain in *Perſia*, that the Kingdom is govern'd by two or three women : it is much worſe in *France*, where women in general bear rule, and take the whole Authority to themſelves, not only by wholeſale but even retale.

Paris, the laſt of the Moon
Chalval, 1717.

LETTER CV.

Usbek to * * *

THERE are a ſort of Books which we never heard of in *Perſia*, and which ſeem mightily in faſhion here : I mean the Journaliſts. Our lazineſs is extremely indulg'd by them; we are overjoyed with being able to diſpatch thirty Volumes in a quarter of an hour.

In moſt Books, the Author has hardly finiſhed his neceſſary compliments

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pliments of introduction, but the Reader is at his last gasp: he leads him half dead into a subject drowned in an ocean of words. This man has a mind to immortalize his name in *Duodecimo*; the other in *Quarto*: one that has a more noble Ambition, aspires to a *Folio*: he is consequently obliged to stretch his subject in proportion; which he does without mercy; reckoning for nothing the fatigue of the poor Reader, who is forced to sweat hard to contract what the Author has taken so much pains to amplify.

I cannot find, * * *, what merit there can be in composing such Works: I cou'd write enow of them, if I had a mind to ruin my health and a Bookseller.

The great fault of the Journalists is their never speaking of any but new Books; as if Truth were ever New. Till a man has read all the Old Books, I see no reason he has to prefer the New.

But

But when they lay it down to themselves as a Law never to speak of Works but what are just hot out of the forge; they also lay down another, which is, to be very stupid. They always take care to avoid criticizing the Books they give extracts of, whatever room there is for so doing: and indeed where is the man so courageous as to venture to create himself ten or a dozen enemies every month?

Most Authors are like the Poets, who wou'd bear a good sound Caning without grumbling: but who, as little tender as they are of their shoulders, are so much so of their Works, that they cannot bear the least Criticism: a man must therefore be very cautious how he attacks them in so sensible a part: and the Journalists know as much: therefore they do just the contrary: they first praise the subject treated upon; which is one piece of stupidity: next they proceed to the praise of the Author, which

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comes from them by mere force; for they have people to deal with whose pens are ready drawn to revenge themselves upon a poor Journalist that they think does not do them justice.

Paris, 5th of the Moon
Zilcadé, 1718.

LETTER CVI.

Rica to * * *.

THE University of *Paris* is the Eldest Daughter of the Kings of *France*, and the Eldest by much: for she is above nine hundred years old: and indeed she does sometimes doat.

I have been told that some time ago she had a great controversy with some Doctors upon account of the Letter * Q, which she was for hav-

* He means Ramus's *Quarrel*.

ing

ing pronounced like a *K*. The dispute grew so hot, that some were stript of their Estates about it: the Parliament was forced to determine the contest: and they granted permission by a solemn decree to all the Subjects of the King of *France* to pronounce that Letter just as they thought fit. It was certainly very diverting to see the two most venerable Bodies in all *Europe* employed about deciding the fate of a letter in the Alphabet.

One would think, my dear ***, that the greatest men lose their Senses when they are assembled together, and that where there are most Wise people there is least Wisdom. Great Bodies always lay so much stress upon minute formalities and vain ceremonies, that the essential is postponed for them. I have heard that a King of *Ar-ragon* † having assembled the States

† In the Year 1610.

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of *Arragon* and *Catalonia*; the first sessions was spent in deciding what Language the deliberations should be held in: the Dispute was warm, and the States were just ready to break up about it, if one had not hit upon an expedient, which was, that the Question should be put in the *Catalan* and the Answer made in the *Arragoneze* Language.

Paris, the 25th of the Moon
Zilhagé, 1718.

LETTER CVII.

Rica to * * *.

THE part a pretty Woman has to act is of a much more serious nature than is commonly imagined: nothing is of higher consequence than what she does at her Toilet every morning in the midst of her Servants; it does not cost a General of an Army more thought how

how to place his Right, or his *Corps de Reserve*, than it does her where to set a Patch, which indeed may fail of success, but which she hopes or foresees will not.

What a constant rack of invention! what perplexity to reconcile the interests of two rivals every moment and seem neuter to both, while she is wholly at the service of either of them, and is the Mediatix in all the causes of complaints which she gives them!

How much hurry in contriving parties of pleasure immediately one upon the neck of another, in making them succeed each other without interruption, and providing against all accidents that might break them.

With all this, their greatest difficulty is not to be diverted, but to seem to be diverted: be as dull and heavy in their company as you please, they will forgive you, provided they can but appear to have been very merry.

I was some days ago at a Supper which some women gave in the Country. All the way thither they were perpetually saying; However, let us laugh heartily and be very merry.

We happened to be very ill matched, and were consequently dull enough. Well, says one of my women, we are pure and merry: there is not a Company in *Paris* so gay as we are. As I began to be quite tired down, a woman shook me and said: Well, are not we rare good company? Aye, answer'd I gaping; I am afraid I shall split my sides with laughing. However gravity got the better of our resolutions; and as to me, from one gape to another I was led into a lethargic sleep that put an end to my share of the mirth.

Paris, 11th of the Moon
Maharram, 1718.

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LETTER CVIII.

Rhedi to Usbek, at Paris.

DURING my stay in *Europe* I employ my self in reading the Historians both ancient and modern: I compare one Age with another: I take delight in seeing them as it were pass away before me; and I particularly dwell upon those great Changes which have made one Age so different from the next, and the Earth so unlike itself.

Thou hast not perhaps taken notice of a thing which gives me continual surprize. How comes the World to be so thin of people in comparison of what it was formerly? How has Nature lost the prodigious fruitfulness of the first ages? Is she grown old and in danger of falling to nothing for want of strength?

I was above a year in *Italy*, where I saw nothing but the broken wrecks of the Ancient *Italy*
once

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once so famous. Tho' every body there lives in the Cities, yet they are perfect desarts for want of inhabitants: they seem to subsist now only to shew us the places in which stood those potent Cities so much talked of in History.

Some affirm that the single City of *Rome* anciently contained more people than the greatest Kingdom in *Europe* does at this day: there were some *Roman* Citizens that had ten, nay twenty thousand slaves, besides those that work'd at their Country Houses: and as there was computed to be five hundred thousand Citizens, we cannot make any conjecture at the whole number of its Inhabitants but what must shock the imagination.

There were once in *Sicily* potent Kingdoms and numerous Nations which are now disappeared: that Island is now considerable for nothing but her Vuleanoes.

Greece is so depopulated that it does not now contain the hundredth

dreth part of its ancient inhabitants.

Spain, formerly so crowded, now exhibits to view nothing but waste unpeopled Fields: and *France* is nothing in comparison of the ancient *Gaul* described by *Cæsar*.

The Northern Countries are strangely decayed: they are very far from being under a necessity now as formerly to divide themselves and send out in swarms Colonies and whole Nations to seek for new Abodes.

Poland and *Turkey* in *Europe* have hardly any inhabitants.

We cannot find in *America* the two hundredth part of the men that once composed such mighty Empires.

Asia is in no better condition. That *Asia Minor* which contained so many potent Monarchies and such a prodigious number of great Cities, has now but two or three. As to the greater *Asia*; that which is under the obedience of the *Turk*
is

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is no better peopled: and as to that which is under the dominion of our Kings, if we compare it with the flourishing state it was in formerly, we shall find it has but a very small share left of the infinite number of Inhabitants which it had in the time of the *Xerxes's* and *Darius's*.

As to the petty States that are upon the borders of these great Empires, they are mere Desarts: such are the Kingdoms of *Irimet-ta*, *Circassia* and *Guriel*. All these Princes, with vast Dominions, can hardly muster up fifty thousand Subjects.

Egypt has failed no less than other Countries.

In short, I take a survey of the whole Earth, and I find nothing but Ruine and Decay: she seems to have been just ravaged by Plague and Famine.

Africa has always been so little known, that we cannot speak of it with so much exactness as of the other parts of the World: but if

we

we may form a judgment from the *Mediterranean* Coasts, which were always well stock't, we find her strangely fallen from what she was when a *Roman* Province. Her Princes are now so weak that they are the most petty Potentates upon the face of the Earth.

Upon a Calculation as exact as can be made in matters of this nature, I find there is hardly in the World the fiftieth part of the people that there was in *Cæsar's* time. And, which is more strange, it grows thinner and thinner every day; and if it goes on at this rate, in ten ages it will be no better than a Desert.

This, my dear *Usbek*, is the most terrible Catastrophe that ever happened in the Universe: but we have hardly perceived it, because its progress was by slow degrees and in the course of a great many Centuries: which denotes some interior ill quality; some secret unsuspect-
ed.

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ed poison; some inward Decay,
which preys upon humane Nature.

Venice, 10th of the Moon
Rhegeb, 1718.

LETTER CIX.

Usbek to Rhedi, at Venice.

THE world, my dear *Rhedi*, is not incorruptible: the Heavens themselves are not; the Astronomers are eye-witnesses of all the changes which are the natural effects of the universal motion of matter.

The Earth is subject to the same Laws of Motion as the other Planets: she suffers a perpetual conflict within, among her own principles: Sea and Land seem to wage eternal wars; every instant produces new conjunctions.

Mankind, in an abode so liable to change, is in a state of no less un-

uncertainty : a hundred thousand causes may act, of which the very least is sufficient to destroy them totally ; and consequently to encrease or diminish their number.

I shall not instance those particular Catastrophes so frequent among the Historians, which have destroyed whole Cities and whole Kingdoms : there are general ones which have often brought the Race of Man to the edge of desolation.

History is full of those universal plagues which have by turns laid waste the Universe. She tells us of one among the rest which was so violent, that it burnt up the very roots of the Plants, and overran the whole known world, quite to the Empire of *Cathay* : one degree more of corruption would perhaps in one single day have cut off all humane Nature.

It is not quite two Ages ago that the most shameful of distempers was felt in *Europe*, *Asia* and *Africa* : in a very short space of time it wrought effects

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effects surpassing belief: there had been an end of mankind, if it had continued its progress with the same fury. Oppressed with misery from their very birth, and incapable of bearing the weight of the duties of Society, they must have perished miserably.

What if the venom had been a little more exalted? And it would certainly have grown so, if by good fortune a remedy had not been hit upon so powerful as that which has been discovered. Perhaps this distemper attacking the parts of generation, would next have attacked generation it self.

But why do we talk of the possibility of the destruction of humane Nature? Has it not already actually happened, and did not the Deluge reduce it to one single family?

Can those who have any knowledge of Nature, or any reasonable idea of God, imagine that Matter and all these Created Things are
but

but ſix thouſand years old ? That God deferred his Works from all Eternity, and made uſe of his Creative Power but yeſterday ? Was it becauſe he could not or would not uſe it before ? But if he could not at one time, he could not at another : it muſt therefore be, becauſe he would not : but as there is no ſucceſſion in God, if we admit that he willed any thing once, he willed it always, and from the beginning.

We muſt not therefore pretend to count the years of the world : the number of ſands upon the Seaſhore is no more to be compared to them than one inſtant.

Yet all Hiſtorians talk of a firſt Father : they deſcribe Humane Nature to us in her infancy. Is it not natural to think that *Adam* was ſaved from ſome common deſtruction, as *Noah* was from the Deluge ; and that theſe great Events have been frequent upon Earth ſince the Creation of the World ?

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I was willing to let thee into these general ideas, before I gave a more particular answer to thy Letter about the loss of people, which has happened within these seventeen or eighteen Centuries: I shall shew thee, in a succeeding Letter, that independantly of physical Causes, there are moral ones which may have produced this effect.

Paris, 8th of the Moon
Chahban, 1718.

LETTER CX.

Usbek to the same.

THOU enquirest the reason why the earth is less peopled than it was anciently: and if thou considerest things maturely, thou wilt find that this great difference proceeds from that which has happened in our Manners.

Since

Since the Christian and Mahometan Religions have divided the *Roman* world, the face of things is strangely altered: those two Religions are far from being so favourable to the propagation of our species, as was that of those Lords of the Universe.

For among the ancient *Romans*, Polygamy was forbidden, wherein their Religion had a very great advantage over the Mahometan; and Divorce was allowed, which gave it no less the advantage over the Christian.

I think nothing can be more contradictory, than the plurality of wives allowed by the Holy Alcoran, and the Command of satisfying them enjoined in the same Book. See your Wives, says the Prophet, because ye are as necessary to them as their vestments, and they are as necessary to you as your vestments. This is a precept which makes the life of a true Mussulman terribly laborious. A man that has the

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the four wives prescribed by the Law, and only as many Concubines and Slaves; must not he be quite oppressed with so many vestments?

Your Wives are your Arable Fields, says the Prophet again: apply your selves therefore to your Tillage; do good for your souls, and you shall find the fruits thereof.

I look upon a good Mussulman as a kind of Athletic Combatant, engaged in perpetual conflicts; but quickly weakned, and sinking under his first fatigues, he languishes in the very field of Victory, and is in a manner buried beneath his own Triumphs.

Nature always acts slowly and sparingly: her operations are never violent: she requires temperance even in her productions: she constantly goes on by rule and measure: if she is precipitated, she presently falls into a languishing decay: she employs all her remaining strength merely for her preservation, quite losing her productive virtue and generative power. To

To this state of debility we are always brought by our great number of women, who are fitter to exhaust than to satisfy us: it is very common among us to see a man with a prodigious Seraglio, and yet a very small number of Children; and those few Children too are generally puny and unhealthy, with a miserable taint of their Father's weakness.

This is not all: these Women being bound to a forced continence, must have people to guard them; which can be none but Eunuchs: Religion, Jealousie, and Reason it self will admit of no others to come near them: these Guardians must be very numerous, both to preserve peace at home, among the continual bickerings of those women; and to prevent attempts from abroad. So that a man who has ten wives or concubines, must have no fewer Eunuchs to guard them. But what a loss to Society is such a number of men,

who may be called Dead from their very Birth? What Depopulation must follow!

The female Slaves kept in the Seraglio to assist the Eunuchs, those numbers of women, generally grow old there in an afflicting Virginity: they cannot marry while they stay there; and when their mistresses are once used to them, they will rarely part with them.

Thus we see how many people of both sexes are taken up about the pleasures of one man: they are perfectly buried as to the State, and rendered totally useless in the propagation of the species.

Constantinople and *Ispahan* are the Capitals of the two greatest Empires in the World: There all things are decreed to meet as in their proper centre; and thither every body repairs from all parts, drawn by a thousand various attractions. Yet even these mighty Cities decay of themselves, and would be soon waste, if our Sovereigns did not almost

almost in every age transport whole Nations to replenish them. I will handle this subject more fully in another Letter.

Paris, 13th of the Moon

Chahban, 1718.

LETTER CXI.

Usbek to the same.

THE Romans had not fewer Slaves than we; nay they had more: but they made a better use of them.

So far were they from hindering the multiplication of their Slaves by forcible methods; that on the contrary, they favoured it to the utmost of their power: they coupled them as much as possible by a sort of marriages: by this means they filled their Houses with Servants of all Ages and Sexes, and the State with people without number.

These children, who at the long-
run grew to be the Wealth of their
Master, were born around him in
surprising multitudes: he alone had
the care of their breeding and edu-
cation: the Fathers, eased of that
burden, wholly followed their na-
tural inclinations, and multiplied
without being in any fear of ha-
ving too large a family.

I have observed to thee, that, a-
mong us, all the Slaves are employed
in guarding our women, and no-
thing more, that they are, with
respect to the State, in a perpetual
detrangy: so that we are to restrain
the cultivation of Arts, and of our
Hands, to some few Heads of Fa-
milies, who apply themselves that
way as little as ever they can.

It was not so among the Romans:
the Common-wealth drew vast ad-
vantages from their Nation of Slaves:
Every one of them had his *peculium*
which he possessed upon such con-
ditions as his Master thought fit:
with this *peculium* he fell to work
in

in that way which his genius inclined him to. One turned Banker; another applied himself to Commerce by Sea: one sold goods by retale; another gave himself to some mechanical Art, or else farmed and cultivated some piece of Land: but all in general laboured with their whole power to improve his *peculium*, which procured him convenience in his present state of servitude, and afforded him a prospect of future liberty: this form'd a laborious Nation, and encouraged Arts and Industry.

These Slaves, when grown rich by their diligence and labour, bought their freedoms, and became Citizens. The Commonwealth was thus replenished daily; and received new families into her bosome as fast as the old ones dropp'd off.

I may perhaps have occasion in some following Letters to prove to thee, that the more men there is in any State, the more its Commerce flourishes: I may also prove as easi-

ly, that the more Commerce flourishes, the more the number of people encreases: these two things necessarily assist and favour each other.

And if this be so, how vastly must that prodigious number of Slaves, who were always active and busie, have grown and encreased? Industry and Plenty gave them birth, and they in return gave birth to Plenty and Industry.

Paris, 16th of the Month

Chabban, 1718.

LETTER CXII.

Usbek to the same.

WE have hitherto spoken only of the *Mahometan* Countries, and enquired into the reason why they should be less populous than those which were under the dominion of the *Romans*: let us now examine

examine what shou'd have occasioned the same effect among the Christians.

Divorce was allowed in the Pagan Religion, and forbidden in the Christian. This change, as little consequence as it may seem to be of at first, had in time dreadful effects, and such as cou'd scarce be imagined.

This not only deprived marriage of all its charms, but struck at its very end: by striving to tie the knot closer, it was only loosened: and instead of uniting peoples hearts more strictly, as was intended, they were divided for ever.

In an action of so voluntary a nature, and where the heart ought to be so much constrained, they mingled constraint, necessity, and even Fate it self. They counted for nothing disgusts, ill humour, and unsociableness of temper: they attempted to fix even the Heart, the most variable and unconstant thing in nature: they fastened together,

gether, without the least prospect of a release, people who were quite weary of each other, and almost constantly ill matched: and practised the cruelty of those Tyrants that used to bind living men to dead carcasses.

Nothing used to contribute more to a mutual agreement, than a liberty of divorce: a husband and wife were the more inclined to bear with their domestic vexations, because they knew they had it in their power to put an end to them: and they often kept this power in their hands all their lives long without using it, upon this single consideration, that they might do it whenever they would.

It is not the same with the Christians, whose present vexations only make them almost mad to think how many more are to come: they have no other prospect in the discomforts of matrimony, but their duration, or rather their eternity: hence arise disgusts, jars, contempt;

tempt; and all the while Poſterity ſuffers. Scarce are three Years of wedlock paſt, but the eſſential deſign of it is neglected: thirty Years of coldneſs enſue: private ſeparations are formed no leſs ſtrong, and perhaps more pernicious, than if they were public: each lives apart, waiting ſingle till the other's death: and all this to the prejudice of future generations. How often does the man, impatient of the eternity of his wife, give himſelf up to women of pleaſure? A ſhameful courſe, and directly contrary to Society, which, without accompliſhing the end of marriage, repreſents at moſt but its pleaſures.

If of two Perſons thus chained together, one be unfit for the deſign of nature, and the propagation of the ſpecies, either by age or conſtitution, that perſon buries the other with him, and makes her as uſeleſs as he is himſelf.

We are not therefore to wonder, that we ſee ſo many marriages among

mong the Christians produce so little fruit: Divorce is abolished: Marriages ill made are not to be repair'd: the women do not, as among the *Romans*, pass thro' the hands of several husbands successively, who by the way made the best of her.

I dare affirm, that if in a Republic like *Sparta*, where the Citizens were under the eternal constraint of odd subtile Laws, and in which there was but one Family, namely the Republic; it had been ordained, that the Husbands shou'd change their wives every year; it wou'd have produced a people without number.

It is no easy matter to find out the reason which shou'd induce the Christians to abolish Divorce. Marriage all over the world is nothing but a Contract capable of all sorts of Conventions; and none ought to have been excluded from it, but such as wou'd have weaken'd the main design of it: but the Christians

istians do not behold it in this light: indeed they can hardly tell you their own notions of it themselves: they say, it was not instituted for the pleasures of sense: on the contrary, as I have already shewn thee, they seem to aim at banishing them out of it as much as possible: but they wou'd make you believe it is an image, a type, and a mystery, which I can make neither head nor tail of.

Paris, the 19th of the Moon
Chahban, 1718.

LETTER CXIII.

Usbek to the same.

THE prohibition of Divorce is not the only cause of the scarcity of people in Christian Countries: the great number of Eunuchs which they have among them is no less the occasion of it.

I mean the Priests and Dervises of both Sexes, who devote themselves to perpetual continence: this among the Christians is the Virtue of Virtues; wherein I am at a loss to find out what they drive at; not comprehending how any thing shou'd be a Virtue which produces no Fruit.

I can't help thinking their Doctors are guilty of a manifest contradiction in saying, that Marriage is Holy; and that Celibacy, which is its direct opposite, is more Holy still: without considering that in matter of Precept and fundamental Dogma's, the good is always the best.

The number of these people professing Celibacy is prodigious: Parents formerly used to condemn their Children to it from their very cradles: now they devote themselves at fourteen Years of Age, which amounts to much the same thing.

This

This trade of Continnence has been the loss of more men than the most dreadful Plagues and the most bloody Wars that ever were in the world. You see in every Religious House an Eternal Family where no body is born, but which is supplied at the expence of all the rest: these Houses stand always open like so many Gulphs, where future generations are swallowed up for ever.

This Policy differs widely from that of the *Romans*, who established penal Laws against those who avoided the Bonds of Marrimony, and were for enjoying a liberty so prejudicial to the public.

I have yet spoken only of the *Roman Catholic Countries*. In the Protestant Religion every body is free to propagate: it allows neither of Priests nor Dervises: and if in the establishment of that Religion, which brought back every thing to the standard of primitive times, its Founders had not been

eternally upbraided with incontinence even for what they did, we need not question but that after having rendered the practice of marriage universal, they would also have lightened the yoke, and quite remov'd the barrier, which in the point of Polygamy separates the *Nazarean* from *Mahomet*. But be that as it will, 'tis certain the Religion of the Protestants gives them a vast advantage over the Catholics.

I might venture to affirm, that, in the present state of things in *Europe*, it is impossible the Catholic Religion shou'd subsist there five hundred years.

Before the diminution of the *Spanish* Greatness, the *Roman* Catholics were much stronger than the Protestants: these latter by degrees got to an *Equilibrium*; and now the scale begins to turn on their side: this superiority will encrease daily: the Protestants will grow much more rich and powerful, and the *Roman* Catholics will grow weaker.

The

The Protestant Countries must be, and actually are, better peopled than the *Roman Catholic* Dominions: whence it follows, First, that their Tributes are more considerable, because they encrease in proportion to the number of those that pay them.

Secondly, that their Lands are better cultivated. Lastly, that their Trade flourishes more, because there are more people that have their fortunes to make; and where there are most wants, there will be most expedients for satisfying those wants. When there are only just people enow to manure the Lands, Commerce must run to destruction: and where there are only as many as are necessary in Trade, the cultivation of the Lands must be neglected: that is in short, both must fall together; because no body can apply to one, but the other must suffer.

As to the *Roman Catholic* Countries, the cultivation of their Lands

is not only neglected, but their industry is even pernicious: it consists in nothing but learning five or six words of a dead Language: a man that has this accomplishment need trouble himself no further about his fortune: the Cloyster offers him a life of Tranquility, which in the world would have cost him labour and pains.

This is not all: the Dervises (Priests) have in their hands almost all the Wealth of the State: they are a Society of Misers that always are taking, but never restore: they daily heap up riches to buy estates with; this wealth, if one may use so bold an expression, falls as it were into a dead palfie; farewell to Circulation, to Trade, Arts, and Manufactures.

There is no Protestant Prince but what raises upon his People ten times more Taxes than the Pope draws from his Subjects: yet these latter are miserable, while the former live in affluence. Commerce

merce revives every thing among the one, while Monkery kills and checks all recruit among the others.

Paris, 26th of the Moon
Chahban, 1718.

LETTER CXIV.

Usbek to the ſame.

WE have nothing more to ſay as to *Aſia* and *Europe*: let us now proceed to *Africa*. We can ſpeak only of its Coaſts, being unacquainted with the innermoſt parts of the Continent.

The *Barbary* Coaſts, where the *Mahometan* Religion is eſtabliſhed, are not ſo well peopled as they were in the times of the *Romans*, for the reaſons already laid down. As to the Coaſts of *Guinea*, they muſt be ſadly ſtrip'd in above two hundred Years paſt, that the petty
Kings

Kings or Heads of Villages have made a trade of selling their Subjects to the *European* Princes, to be carried into their *American* Colonies.

What is most singular is, that this very *America*, which yearly receives so many new Inhabitants, is it self a Desert, and is no manner of gainer by the continual losses of *Africa*. Those Slaves being transported into a strange Climate, dye by thousands: and the labour of the Mines, in which both Natives and Strangers are perpetually employed; the malignant exhalations that arise from them; the quick-silver which they are continually using, destroy them every moment.

Nothing can be more extravagant, than to fling away the lives of infinite numbers of men, to get out of the bowels of the earth Gold and Silver; those Metals in themselves so useless, and which are Riches only because they

they have been choſen for the marks of them.

Paris, *laſt of the Moon*

Chahban, 1718.

LETTER CXV.

Usbek, *to the ſame.*

THE fruitfulness of a People depends ſometimes upon the moſt minute circumſtances in the world; ſo that very often there requires nothing more than a new turn in the imagination to make them much more numerous than before.

The Jews, ſo often exterminated and always multiplying, have repaired their continual loſſes and deſtructions by the ſingle hope which reigns in every family, that they ſhall have a potent King born among them, who ſhall be Lord of the whole Univerſe.

The

164 *Persian Letters.*

The Ancient Kings of *Persia* had so many millions of Subjects, only by means of that Article in the Religion of the *Magi*, that the most pleasing action to God that man could do was to get a Child, to manure a Field, and to plant a Tree.

If *China* is so prodigiously populous, it proceeds only from a particular way of thinking: for as the children look upon their Fathers as a kind of Gods, and respect them as such even in this life, and after their death honour them by sacrifices, wherein they believe that their Souls being dipt in the *Syon* resume a new life, every one is inclined to encrease a family so dutiful to this life, and so necessary in the next.

On the contrary, the Countries of the *Mahometans* grow every day thinner and thinner, by means of an opinion, which, Holy as it is, has very pernicious effects where it is rooted in men's hearts. We look

look upon our ſelves as Sojourners upon earth, that ought to have all our thoughts fixed upon a better Country: all uſeful and durable Labours; all diligence to ſecure fortunes for our Children; all ſchemes that have any view beyond this ſhort frail life, we look upon as ſo many extravagancies. Indolent as to what is preſent, and undiſturbed at what is to come, we take no care to repair public edifices; nor to grub up uncultivated Lands; nor to manure thoſe which are fit to receive our cares: we live in a general inſenſibility, and leave every thing to Providence.

It is a monſtrous Spirit of Vanity that eſtabliſhed among the Europeans the unjuſt Law of primogeniture, which is ſo great a check to propagation, in that it turns the attention of a Father only upon one of his Children, and takes his eye off of all the reſt; in that it obliges him, in order to raiſe a great fortune for one, to neglect the

the settlement of the rest: lastly, in that it destroys the equality of the Citizens, which is the great cause of their Opulence.

Paris, 4th of the Moon

Rhamazan, 1718.

LETTER CXVI.

Usbek to the same.

THE Countries inhabited by Savages are commonly very thin of People, thro' the general aversion they have to labour and the culture of the Earth. This unhappy prejudice is so strong, that when they would make an imprecation upon one of their enemies, they wish him no greater curse, but to be forced to plough a Field; thinking there are no Exercises but Hunting and Fishing that are Noble and worthy of their attention.

But

But as there often happen years, in which Hunting and Fishing fall short; they are cut off by frequent famines: besides that there is no Country in the world so abounding in Game and Fish, as to subsist a great People; because Animals always fly from places that are too populous.

Besides, the Hords of the Savages, consisting each of two or three hundred inhabitants, being totally separated from each other, and having interests as different as those of two Empires, can never support themselves; not having the same resource as great states, whose parts all succour and assist each other.

There is among the Savages another custom no less pernicious than the first; which is the cruel practice in use among the women, of making themselves miscarry that their bigness may not make them disagreeable to their Husbands.

There are dreadful Laws here against that Crime: they are even carried

carried to excess. Any woman that does not declare her conception to a Magistrate is punished with death if her fruit is lost: shame, modesty, nay even accidents shall never excuse her.

Paris, the 9th of the Moon

Rhamazan, 1718.

LETTER CXVII.

Usbek to the same.

THE common effect of Colonies is to weaken the Country out of which they are drawn, without peopling that to which they are sent. Men ought to remain where they are: there are distempers which are got by changing a good air for a bad; and others which come from changing it at all.

When a Country is desert it is a kind of sign that there is some particular vice in the nature of the Climate:

Climate: so that when we take men from a happy loyl to send them into such a Country, we do the very contrary to what we intend.

The *Romans* knew this by experience: they banished all their Criminals into *Sardinia*, and sent *Jews* thither too: they were obliged to be contented under their loss, which the contempt they had for those wretches made very easy to them.

The great *Chah* being minded to deprive the *Turks* of the means of their subsisting great Armies upon his Frontiers, transported almost all the *Armenians* out of their own Country, and sent above twenty thousand Families of them into the Province of *Guilan*, where they most of them perished in a very short time.

All the Migrations of People to *Constantinople* have had ill success.

The prodigious number of *Negroes* before spoken of has not filled *America*.

Ever since the destruction of the

Jews by Hadrian, Palestine has been without Inhabitants.

It must therefore be granted that great depopulations are almost irreparable; because a People that is diminished to a certain degree, remains in the same condition; and if by chance they do gather up again, it requires whole ages to recruit their losses.

But if in a state of decay the least of the circumstances beforementioned happens to concur; it is not only never to be made up again, but it grows worse and worse daily, and the Nation is drawing to its end.

The expulsion of the *Moors* out of *Spain* is still as much felt as at the first day: their vacancy is so far from closing up, that it grows every day greater and greater.

Since the depopulation of *America*, the *Spaniards* that came in the room of its ancient Inhabitants have not been able to repeople it: on the contrary, by a fatality which I might better call the Divine Justice,

vice, the Destroyers destroy themselves, and rot away perpetually.

Princes therefore must not think to people great Dominions by Colonies: I do not say they never succeed: there are some Climates so happy, that the Inhabitants multiply continually; witness those Isles which were peopled by a few Distempered folks that some Ships left there, where they immediately recovered their healths.

But tho' such Colonies should always succeed, they rather divide than encrease the Power, unless they are of very small extent, and just such as are necessary to inhabit a place useful in Commerce.

The Carthaginians as well as the Spaniards had found out America, or at least some great Islands where they drove a prodigious Trade: but when they found the number of their Inhabitants decrease, that wise Republic forbid that Trade.

* Perhaps the Author means the Isle of Bourbon.

I might venture to maintain, that instead of sending *Spaniards* into the *Indies*, they shou'd rather bring all the *Indians* and all the *Metifs* into *Spain*: they should restore to that Monarchy all its dispersed Subjects, and if but half of those great Colonies were left, *Spain* wou'd be the most formidable power in *Europe*.

We may compare Empires to a Tree, whose Branches when too far extended draw all the nourishment from the Trunk, and are good for nothing but shade.

Nothing shou'd cure Princes more of the madness of distant Conquests than the example of the *Portuguese* and *Spaniards*.

Those two Nations having with inconceivable rapidity conquered immense Kingdoms; more amazed at their own Victories, than the conquered Nations were at their defeat, they next considered of methods to preserve them: they both took different ways.

The

The Spaniards, deſpairing of retaining the conquered Nations in their ſubjection, reſolved to exterminate them, and to ſend Loyal Subjects out of Spain in their room; never was horrid deſign ſo punctually executed. A People as numerous as all the Nations in Europe put together, were cut off from the face of the earth by thoſe Barbarians, who when they had diſcovered the Indies ſeemed alſo reſolved to diſcover to the world the utmoſt pitch of Cruelty.

By this barbarity they kept thoſe Countries under their dominion. Judge by this what a fatal thing Conqueſt is, when theſe are its effects. For indeed this bloody expedient was the only one: how was it poſſible they ſhould hold ſo many millions of men in their obedience? How could they have carried on a Civil War at ſuch a remote diſtance? What would have become of them, if they had given time to thoſe People to recover out of the

consternation they were in, at the arrival of those new Gods, and the terror of their Thunder?

As to the *Portuguese*, they took a quite different method: they did not make use of Cruelties; and therefore they were soon driven out of the Countries they had discovered: the *Dutch* favoured the Rebellion of those Nations, and made their own advantage of it.

What Prince would envy the fate of these Conquerors? who would have any of these conquests upon such conditions? The one were presently driven out of them; the other made them nothing but Deserts, and made their own Countries little better.

It is the fate of Heroes to ruin themselves in conquering of Countries which they lose again immediately, or in subduing of Nations which they are forced to destroy, like that madman who spent his estate in buying Statues which he threw into the Sea, and Glasses
which

which he broke as soon as he had them.

Paris, 8th of the Moon

Rhamazan, 1718.

LETTER CXVIII.

Usbek to the same.

Mildness of Government contributes vastly to the increase of mankind. All Republics are a convincing Proof of this; but none so much as *Switzerland* and *Holland*, two the worst Countries in *Europe*, if we consider the nature of their Land, and yet the fullest of People. Nothing invites Strangers more than Liberty, and Opulence which always follows it; the former is courted for its own sake; and the Calls of nature attract men to those Countries where the latter is to be found.

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The species multiplies wherever there's a sufficiency for the Children without lessening the Substance of their Parents.

The Equality of the Inhabitants, which usually produces an equality in their fortunes, brings Plenty, and conveys Life into every part of the Body Politic.

The case is otherwise where the Government is Despotic: the Prince, the Courtiers, and a few private men ingross all the Riches, whilst the rest languish in extreme want and misery.

If a man is in narrow circumstances, and finds himself likely to beget children poorer than himself, he will decline marrying; or if he does marry, he will be afraid of having too great a number of children, who may utterly undo him, and be in a worse condition themselves than their Father was at first.

The rustick or peasant, I own, being once marry'd, will people the
com-

commonwealth alike, whereties he
be rich or poor, he values not that
he's sure to leave his Children one
Inheritance, his Plow; so nothing
ever hinders him from blindly fol-
lowing the Instinct of Nature.

But of what use to a State are
those heaps of Children that pine
away their lives in Beggary and In-
digence? many of 'em perish as fast
as they're born: they seldom or ne-
ver prosper: feeble and weak, they
die by retail a thousand different
ways, or by wholesale are swept a-
way by frequent popular distempers,
which a bad diet and poverty never
fail to produce: such as escape free,
attain the Age of manhood, with-
out having the strength of it, and
droop away the remainder of their
Lives in a wretched debilitation to
ven of necessities.

Men are like Plants that never flour-
ish if they are not well cultivated: i
among a miserable People, the
species loses of its number, and

H 5

some

sometimes degenerates over and above. *France* can furnish us with a sufficient proof of this. In the late Wars, the fear of being listed for Soldiers obliged most of the young men to marry; and that too in a very unripe Age, and in the very bosom of Poverty. From these Marriages sprung multitudes of Children, that are now missing in *France*, and whom Misery, Famine and Distempers have caus'd to disappear.

Now if in so happy a climate, so regular a Government as *France*, there is room for such observations as these; what shall we say of other Nations?

Parting of the Moon

Rhamazan, 1718.

LETTER

LETTER CXIX.

Usbek to Mollah Mehemet Ali,
keeper of the three Sepul-
chres at Com.

WHAT avail the fastings of
the *Innamis*, and the Sack-
cloths of the *Mollahs*? Twice has
the hand of God been heavy on the
Children of the Law: the Sun
wraps it self up in Clouds, or if he
shines out, 'tis only to make their
overthrow the more conspicuous:
their Armies assemble, and are scar-
ter'd like dust before the wind.

The Empire of the *Ozmins* has
receiv'd two such blows it never
felt before; a Christian *Mufti* has
much ado to keep it from falling:
the Grand *Vizir* of Germany is the
scourge of God, sent to chastise the
followers of Omar; wherever he
moves he carries with him the wrath
of Heaven, and pours it forth up-
on

180 *Persian Letters.*

on their Rebellion and Perfidious-
ness. XIX.

Sacred Spirit of the *Imams*,
thou weepest night and day over
the Children of the Prophet whom
the detestable *Qaza* has caus'd to
go astray: thy Bowels are mov'd at
their misfortunes: thou desirest their
conversion, and not their destructi-
on: thou desirest to see them united
under the Banner of *Holy* by the
tears of the Saints, and not dis-
pers'd among the mountains and in
the deserts, by the terror of the
Infidels.

Paris, 16 of the *Month*, 1718.
Chabai.

LETTER CXX.

*Rica to * * **

MEN are at a loss, in all Reli-
gions, concerning the pro-
perties design'd for such as have liv'd
well.

well. The wicked may be ſeared by a long detail of pains and torments, which which they are threatn'd at but as for the virtuous, what promiſes to make to them, men know not it ſeems as if it were eſſential to the nature of all pleaſures to be ſhort lived: fancy can hardly figure to it ſelf any other ſort.

I have ſeen deſcriptions of Paradiſe capable of diſgusting all men of right underſtanding: ſome repreſent the happy ſhades inceſſantly playing on the Flute: others condemn 'em to the puniſhment of eternally walking about: others again will have thoſe above to be always muſing on their miſtreſſes here below, not thinking a hundred millions of years term long enough to make 'em loſe the reliſh of theſe amorous inquietudes.

This brings to my mind a ſtory I heard told by one who had been in the Mogul Country: it ſhews that the Indian Priests are no more ſuſceptible than the others in the ideas

ideas they have of the pleasures of Paradise.

A Woman that had just lost her husband, went in form to the Governour of the Town to beg his permission to let her burn her self; but as in all Countries under the *Mahometan* they abolish this cruel custom as much as possible, he gave her a flat refusal.

When she saw her Prayers ineffectual, she flew into a violent Passion: Was ever such hard usage as this; cry'd she, that a poor woman should not have leave to burn her self when she has a mind to it! was ever the like seen? My Mother, my Aunt, my Sister, they all burn'd themselves; and when I come to ask this cursed Governour's leave to do the like, he falls into a passion, and shows me like a madman. There happen'd to be present a young Paragon Priest. Indeed, says the Governour to him, this is your doing, it was you that instilled this fury

fury into the woman's brain. Indeed, not I, says he, I never spoke to her in all my life; but if she'll be ruled by me, she shall consummate her sacrifice; she will do an action well pleasing to the God *Bram*, nor will she fail of being well rewarded; for she shall surely find her Husband in the other world, and be marry'd to him over again: How? cries the woman in a terrible fright, find my Husband again? I'll not burn my self: burn my self for him? a pcevilish, jealous-pated wretch, and so old too, that if the God *Bram* has not wrought some change in him, I'm sure he has no occasion for me: burn my self for him? — No, not the tip of my little Finger to redeem him from the deepest hole in Hell: two old *Bonzes*, whom I consulted, and who knew what manner of life I led with him, took care, I thank them, to conceal this part from me: but if the God *Bram* hath no other pleasure to make me, than this, he may well keep it him-

Myself, I'll have none of that kind
 of love. Mr. Governor, I have re-
 nounced my Religion and turn'd
 Moslem. And as for you, and me, look-
 ing on the *Dunse*, you may go and
 tell my Husband that I never en-
 joyed a better state of health in
 all my life. I wish for the sake of
 my dear husband, that I were dead
 and buried in the same tomb with
 him. *Chalvali* 1718.

LETTER CXXII
 From Prince Usbek to his
 Son Mirza Usbek.

I Expect thee here to-morrow;
 I mean time I send thee by Lec-
 ters which came from *Synave*
 mine advice, that the Great *Mogul*
 Embassador has been ordered to
 withdraw out of their Kingdom.
 It is added, that the King's Noble
 is secured, the Prince Shauwas in-
 trusted with the King's Proclamation,
 and that they have conveyed him
 to

to a strong Castle, where he's very strictly confin'd; and withal, that they have degraded him, and stript him of all his honours. I am concern'd at this Prince's misfortunes, and lament his fate.

I own to thee, *Usbek*, that I never saw the Tears of any Person trickle down, without being mov'd with Compassion. I have a feeling for the unhappy, as if none but they were Men: and even those in Power, towards whom I have a heart of Stone when they are in the height of their Prosperity, I can't help loving them the moment they fall into Disgrace.

And indeed, in their prosperity what have they to do with an impertinent Tenderness? it looks too much like equality: they much rather chuse Respect, which requires no manner of return; but as soon as they are fallen from their Grandeur, nothing but our Lamentations can make them recal to their mind the Idea of their former high condition.

Methinks there is something very natural, and even very great, in the Saying of a certain Prince, who being just ready to fall into his Enemies Power, seeing his Courtiers round about him all in tears, I find, says he, by your tears, that I'm still your King.

Paris, 3d of the Month

Chival, 1718.

LETTER CXXII.

Rica to Ibben, at Smirna.

THOU hast a thousand times heard of the famous King of Sweden; he was besieging a place in a Kingdom call'd Norway, as he was visiting the Trenches with only one Engineer, he receiv'd a shot in his head, which kill'd him upon the spot. His Chief Minister was immediately secur'd, the States met, and sentenc'd him to lose his head. He

Persian Letters. 187

He was accus'd of a very high Crime, namely Calumniating the Nation, and creating in the King a diffidence of his people; an offence, in my opinion, worthy of a thousand Deaths.

For in short, if it is an ill action to blacken in the mind of one's Prince the lowest of his Subjects, what is it to traduce a whole people, and rob them of the Goodwill of him, whom Providence has set up to make them happy?

I would have men speak to Kings as the Angels speak to our holy Prophet.

Thou knowest that in the sacred Banquets, where the Lord of Lords descends from the most sublime Throne in the world, to communicate himself to his slaves, I us'd to make it a severe law to my self to curb an unruly tongue. I was never seen to let slip the least word that could be offensive to the ears of his Subjects: though I was sometimes oblig'd to lay

lay aside Sobriety, yet I never quitted my Honesty; and in that trial of our Fidelity I risk'd my Life, but never my Virtue.

I know not how it happens, but there's hardly ever a Prince so bad, but his Minister is worse: if he commits any ill action he is still prompted to it, which makes that the ambition of Princes is never so dangerous, as baseness of soul in his Counsellors: but is it not strange for a man that kept into the Ministry but yesterday, that perhaps to-morrow will be out again, in a moment to become an enemy to himself, his family, his country, and a nation yet to come out of the loins of that very people whose destruction he is going to compass?

A Prince has Passions, the Minister operates upon those Passions: 'tis by them he directs his Ministry: he has no other aim, nor will have any other aim: the Courtiers debauch his Ministry, and he more dan-

dangerouſly flatters him with his Counſels, with the deſigns he puts him upon, and the maxims which he lays down to him.

Paris, 25th of the Moon

Saphar, 1719.

Every body ſeems to be in a hurry to ſee the new

Letter CXXII

Rica to Usbek

I Was paſſing the other day over the Pont Neuf with a friend of mine: he met a man of his acquaintance, who he ſaid was a Geometrian; and indeed his whole appearance ſpoke as much, for he was in a profound Meditation: my friend was forced to pull him by the ſleeve a conſiderable time, and to ſhake and jogg him to make him deſcend to him: ſo buſy was his head about a Curve which perhaps he had been hammering his brains upon for eight days before: great civilities paſſed between them, and they

they mutually inform'd each other in the news of the Learned world: these discourses led them to the door of a Coffee-house, wherein I enter'd along with them.

I observ'd that our Geometrician was receiv'd by every body with great officiousness, and that the boys of the Coffee-house paid him much more respect than they did to two Musqueteers who were in the corner of the room; as for him, he seem'd to like the place he was in very well: he unwrinkled his brow a little, and began to look cheerful and laugh, as if he had not the least tincture of Geometry in his whole composition.

Mean time, with great exactness he measur'd every thing that was said in conversation: he resembled one that in a Garden with his Sword cuts off the heads of flowers that rise up above the rest: a Slave, nay, a Martyr to Regularity, he was as much offended at any thing that look'd like a flight of Wit,

Wit, as a tender eye is by too strong a light: nothing to him was indifferent, provided it was true; and accordingly his conversation was pretty singular. He was come that day out of the country, in company of a man who had been to see a noble Castle, and very fine Gardens: for his part, he saw nothing in it but a building of sixty foot in front, upon five and thirty in depth, and a wood of ten Acres, in the form of a Parallelogram: he would have had the rules of Perspective observ'd in such a manner, as that the walks of the Avenues might have appear'd throughout of one and the same breadth; and he would have laid down an infallible method of doing it: he seem'd hugely pleas'd with a Dial he met with there of a very odd contrivance, and was furiously angry at a learned man that sat next me, who unhappily ask'd him if the Dial shew'd the *Babylonian* hours.

Another

Another in the room was talking of the bombarding the Castle of *Tontarabia*: upon which he presently gives us the properties and nature of the line which the Bombs had describ'd in the Air, and being overjoy'd at this his knowledge, he never so much as enquir'd, nor desir'd to know, what success the bombardment had. Another person was complaining that he had been ruin'd the winter before by an inundation: I'm glad of it with all my heart, says the Geometrician, I find I was right in the observation I made, and that there fell at least two inches of water upon the earth, more than the year before.

A moment after this he went out, and we follow'd him: walking very fast, and neglecting to look before him, he ran full butt against another Man: it was a violent shock; and each of them rebounded back, in proportion to his respective velocity and bulk. Falling

foul on one another in this manner, 'twas some time before they could recover themselves: at last the other Man, with his hand up at his forehead, says to the Geometrician, I'm very glad you run against me, for I have great news to tell you: I have just now publish'd my *Horace*. *Horace*! says the Geometrician, in has been publish'd these two thousand years. You don't understand me, says the other; 'tis a translation of that ancient Author, which I have just now publish'd; I have been twenty years employed in Translations.

How, Sir? said the Geometrician; have you been twenty years without thinking? you speak for others, and they think for you? Don't you believe, Sir, says the Scholar, that I have done the Public considerable service, in making the reading of good Authors familiar to them? I don't absolutely say so: I've as great a value as others for the sublime Genius's

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whom you dress up in disguise: but you'll never be like them in the least: for if you translate on to Eternity, you'll never be translated your self.

Translations are like Copper Money, which in proportion have the same value as a piece of Gold, nay, and are of much greater use among the people; but still they are light, and have a base alloy.

You say, that you are for reviving among us these illustrious Dead; and I own that you give 'em indeed a Body, but you don't endow 'em with Life, there is still wanting a Spirit to animate them.

Why don't you rather apply your self to the search of a thousand glorious truths, which may be easily come at by a geometrical calculation? After this short admonition they parted, not over-satisfied with one another, you may well believe.

Paris, the last of the Moon

Rebiab, 1719.

LET-

LETTER CXXIV.

Rica to * * *

I Shall entertain thee in this Letter, with an account of a certain people called *Intelligencers* or *Newsmongers*, who meet in a spacious Garden, where their idleness continually finds employment; they are of no manner of use to the State, and have been talking these fifty years to as much purpose, as if they had so long just said nothing at all: however, they fancy themselves considerable people, because their thoughts are taken up with magnificent projects, and are busy'd in nothing but great affairs.

The Basis of their conversation is an impertinent and ridiculous curiosity: there is no Cabinet so close, which they don't pretend to penetrate into: they won't allow themselves to be ignorant of any thing: they know the exact num-

ber of our August Sultan's Wives; how many Children he gets in a year; and although they're at no expence for spies, they are thoroughly inform'd of the measures he is taking to reduce the exorbitant power of the Emperor of the *Turks*, and that of the *Moguls*.

They have no sooner exhausted the Present, but they shoot themselves into the Future; and being before-hand with Providence, they prevent the Almighty in all sublimary proceedings: they lead a General by the hand; and after they have prais'd him for a thousand fooleries which he never did commit, they prepare a thousand more for him, which he never will.

Armies they make fly like Cranes, and Walls fall down as if they were made of Pasteboard: they have bridges upon all Rivers, secret passages through all Mountains, immense magazines amidst burning sands: they want nothing but their senses.

Persian Letters. 197

A man with whom I lodge received the following Letter from one of this tribe, which I took a copy of, on account of its singularity.

S I R,

I am seldom mistaken in my conjectures, on the affairs of the times: the first of January 1711 I foretold that the Emperor Joseph would die in the course of a year: it is true, that as he was then in very good health, I thought I should expose myself to be laugh't at, if I had been explicate; for which reason I made use of terms somewhat Enigmatical; but people that know how to reason, understood me perfectly well.

As soon as the war was declared between the Emperor and the Turks, I went and look'd out for all the Gentlemen of our fraternity in every corner of the Tuilleries; I conven'd 'em to meet at the Fountain, and foretold 'em that Belgrade would be besieg'd and taken: I was so fortunate

nare us to find my prediction fulfilled: it is true, that about the middle of the siege I wager'd a hundred Pistoles that it would be taken the eighteenth of August *; it was not taken till the day after. That a man shou'd lose, that was so near the Game! When I found the Spanish Fleet landing their Men in Sardinia, I judg'd they would make a Conquest of it: as I said so it happen'd: Pust up with this success, I added, that this victorious Fleet would go and make a descent at Final, in order to conquer the Milanese. Finding this notion not readily received, I resolv'd to support it with a high hand: I betted fifty Pistoles, and lost them too: for that Dog Alberoni, in breach of Treaties, sent his Fleet into Sicily, and trick'd at once two great Politicians, the Duke of Savoy and my self. This, Sir, has so confounded me, that I'm now resolv'd to prophecy on, but never to lay Wagers again. Formerly
this

this practice of laying Wagers was unknown in the Tuilleries; and the late M. the C. d. L. did not allow of 'em, but since a pack of pert Coxcombs have intruded amongst us, we know not whereabouts we are. We no sooner open our mouths to tell a piece of news, but up starts one of these young Fellows, and challenges you, he'll lay you any wager to the contrary.

Another day, as I was opening my Manuscript, and fitting my spectacles to my nose, one of these Bullies laying hold of the interval between the first word and the second, says to me, I'll bett a hundred Pistoles upon the Negative. I made as if I did not mind what he said, and proceeding in a louder voice than before, says I, the Marechal de * * * having intelligence. . . . It's false, says he, your news is always full of impertinence, there is not the least spark of common sense in it. I beg, Sir, that you will do me the favour to lend me thirty Pistoles; for I must needs say this wagering has very much disorder'd my

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affairs :

200 Persian Letters.

affairs: I send you the copy of two Letters, which I wrote to the Chief Minister.

I am, &c.

Letter from the Intelligencer,
to the Chief Minister.

MY LORD,

I Am the most zealous Subject the King ever had; 'twas I that oblig'd one of my friends to execute a project which I had form'd of a Book, to demonstrate that Lewis the Grand was the greatest Prince that ever deserv'd that Title. I have been long employ'd upon another Work, which will do yet more honour to our Nation, if your Lordship pleases to grant me a Patent: my design is to prove, that since the beginning of the Monarchy, the French have never once been beaten; and that all that has been hitherto said to the contrary by the Historians, are downright lies; I am oblig'd to set them right in many particulars,

particulars, and I will be bold to say, that no man exceeds me in the critical part.

MY LORD,

HAVING lost M. the C. d. L. we beg you would be pleas'd to let us chuse a President: our conferences are in great disorder, and the Affairs of State are not discuss'd therein with that regularity they us'd to be: our young men behave themselves without the least regard to their seniors, and without any discipline among themselves: 'tis the very counsel of Rehoboam, wherein the young men prescribe to the old. In vain we represent to them, that we were in peaceable possession of the Tuilleries twenty years before they were born; I believe they'll quite drive us out in time, and when they have oblig'd us to quit those places, where we have so often call'd up the Ghosts of our French Heroes, we must go and hold our conferences

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in

in the King's garden, or some more remote place.

I am, &c.

Paris, 7th of the Moon

Gemmadi 2, 1719.

LETTER CXXV.

Rhedi to Rica, at Paris.

ONE of the things which most exercised my curiosity after my arrival in *Europe*, was the History and Origin of Republicks. Thou knowest that generally the *Asiatics* have not so much as the least idea of this sort of Government, and that their imagination never extended so far as to comprehend, there cou'd possibly be any other sort. than the Despotic throughout the world.

The first governments were Monarchical: 'twas only by chance,
and

and length of time, that Republics were formed.

Greece having been ſwallow'd up by a Deluge, new inhabitants came to repeople it: ſhe had almoſt all her colonies from *Egypt*, and the neareſt *Aſiatic* Countries: and thoſe Countries being govern'd by Kings, the people that came out of them were govern'd in the like manner. But the tyranny of thoſe Princes growing too heavy, the people ſhook off the yoke, and from the broken remains of ſo many Kingdoms aroſe thoſe Republics which made *Greece* ſo very flouriſhing, the only polite country amidſt Barbarians.

The love of liberty, and averſion to Kings, preserv'd *Greece* a long time in a ſtate of independence, and very far extended the Republican government. The Cities of *Greece* found Allies in *Aſia* Minor: they ſent thither Colonies as free as themſelves, which were as ſo many ramparts againſt the attempts of

of the King of *Persia*. This was not all: *Greece* peopled *Italy*, *Italy* *Spain*, and perhaps *Gaul*. 'Tis notorious that the great *Hesperia*, so famous among the ancients, was at the beginning *Greece*, which was look'd upon by its neighbours as the seat of Felicity: the *Greeks* not finding at home that happy Country, went and look'd for it in *Italy*; those in *Italy*, in *Spain*; those of *Spain* in *Bætica* or *Portugal*: so that all these Regions went by this Name among the Ancients. The *Greek* Colonies carry'd along with 'em a spirit of liberty, which they had assum'd from that kindly Climate. And accordingly we seldom or never, in those remote times, meet with Monarchies in *Italy*, *Spain*, or either of the *Gauls*. We shall see by and by, that the people of the *North* and of *Germany* were no less free than the others: and if there are appearances of any thing like Royalty among 'em, it is because their leaders of Armies,

or

or heads of Republics, were miſtaken for Kings.

All this happen'd in *Europe*: as for *Aſia* and *Africa* they were ever oppreſs'd with Deſpotiſm; excepting ſome Towns of *Aſia Minor* already taken notice of; and the Republic of *Carthage* in *Africa*.

The World was divided between two powerful Republics, *Rome* and *Carthage*: nothing is ſo well known as the beginning of the *Roman* Republic; and nothing ſo little known as the origin of that of *Carthage*: we are utterly ignorant of the ſucceſſion of *African* Princes after *Dido*, nor do we know by what means they came to loſe their Power. The prodigious increaſe of the *Roman* Republic would have been a great bleſſing to Mankind, had there not been that unreaſonable difference between the Citizens of *Rome* and the conquered Nations: had they given to the Governours of Provinces a more limited Authority; had

had they paid due regard to those Divine Laws made to restrain their Tyranny; and had they not, in order to silence those laws, imploy'd the very treasures which their rapine and injustice had accumulated together.

Liberty seems to be calculated to the genius of the Nations of Europe, and Slavery adapted to that of the *Asiatics*. In vain did the *Romans* offer that invaluable treasure to the *Cappadocians*; that worthless Nation refus'd it, and courted servitude with the same ardour as other Nations pursu'd liberty.

Cæsar crush'd the *Roman* Republick, and brought it under arbitrary Power.

Europe groan'd a long time beneath the military and violent Government; and the *Roman* mildness was chang'd into a hard-hearted oppression.

Mean while infinite numbers of unknown Nations swarm'd from out

out the *Norrb*; ſpread themſelves like Torrents through all the *Roman* Provinces; and finding it as eaſy a thing to make Conqueſts, as to exerciſe their Pyracies, they diſmembred thoſe Provinces, and made Kingdoms of 'em. Theſe people were free; and they ſo confirm'd the Authority of the Kings, that they were properly ſpeaking no more than Leaders of Armies. Thus thoſe Kingdoms, though founded in force, felt not the yoke of a Conqueror. When the Nations of *Aſia*, namely the *Turks* and the *Tartars*, made any Conqueſts, they being accuſtom'd to the will and pleaſure of one ſingle Perſon, thought of nothing more than bringing him new Subjects, and by the force of Arms eſtabliſh his violent Authority: but the *Northern* Nations being free in their own Country, when they had ſeiz'd the *Roman* Provinces, took care not to beſtow on their Chiefs too large a Power. Nay, ſome of them,

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them, the *Vandals*, for inſtance, in *Africa*, the *Goths* in *Spain*, depos'd their Kings whenever they were diſſatisfy'd with them; and the others too abridg'd the Authority of the Prince a thouſand ways: a great number of Lords took ſhare of it with him; a War was never enter'd upon without their conſent; the Plunder was divided between the General and the Soldiers; no taxation in favour of the Prince; the Laws were made in aſſemblies of the whole Nation: Such was the fundamental principle of all thoſe States that were form'd out of the wrecks of the *Roman Empire*.

Venice, 20th of the Moon
Regeb, 1719.

LETTER

LETTER CXXVI

Rica to ***

SOME five or six Months ago I was in a Coffee-House, where I observ'd a Gentleman very well habited in company with others, who were very attentive to him: the Subject of his discourse was the Pleasures of *Paris*, and he lamented his condition, that he was obliged to live in the Country. I have, says he, fifteen thousand Livres yearly income in Land, I should be much happier with a fourth part of it in Money and portable effects. 'Tis to no purpose to press my Tenants, and sue 'em for Arrears, I make 'em but the more insolent: I never yet could see a hundred Pistoles together: were I to owe ten thousand Livres, they would seize my Lands, and I should be utterly undone.

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I went my way, without heeding what he had been saying; but happening yesterday to be in that neighbourhood I enter'd into the same house, and saw a grave man with a pale long visage, who in the midst of five or six talkers seem'd to be very dull and melancholy; at last breaking out, Gentlemen, says he, I'm ruin'd; I have not wherewithal to buy me bread; I have actually by me two hundred thousand Livres in Bank Notes, and a hundred thousand Crowns in specie: I'm in a terrible condition: I thought my self Rich, and am a Beggar: had I methinks but one slip of Land to retire to, I might be sure of something; but I have not so much Land as will lye under the circumference of my Hat. And I chanc'd to turn about, and saw another man making ugly faces, as if he had been possess'd. Who shall we trust, cry'd he? To lend a Sum of Mony out of pure Friendship, and the Rascal to pay it me now!

now! bafe Treachery! well, he may do as he pleases, I shall never have a good opinion of him again as long as I live.

At his Elbow sat another habbily dress'd, who lifting up the edge of his eyes, Heaven prosper, cries he, the Schemes of our Ministers; may I see Stock at two thousand, and all the Lacquies in Paris richer than their Masters. I had the curiosity to ask his Name, and was told he was extremely poor, and had as poor a Trade. He is a Genealogist, and hopes that his trade will turn up trump, if Fortune-making continues thus, and that all the rich Upstarts will have occasion for him to reform their Name, new-mould their Ancestors, and embellish their Coaches: he fancies that he shall have the making as many Men of Quality as he pleases, and he skips for joy that he shall have full employment.

Afterwards came in an old, pale, wither'd skeleton of a Man, whom

I knew to be a Coffee-House Politician before he sat down: he was not of the number of those, who have a triumphant assurance against all vicissitudes of Fortune, and preface nothing but victories and trophies: no, he was one of those Tremblers who deal in nothing but sad News. Affairs have but an ill aspect on the side of *Spain*, says he; we have no Cavalry upon the Frontier, and 'tis to be fear'd Prince *Pio*, who is very strong in Horse, will lay all *Languedoc* under Contribution.

Over-against me sat a Philosopher, none of the best accoutred, who took this News-monger into his compassion, and lifted up his shoulders as fast as the other did his voice: I drew near to him, and he whispers me, That Puppy there, says he, has been this hour entertaining us with his fears for *Languedoc*; whereas I discover'd yesterday a spot in the Sun, which, if it should spread, would confound the

the whole frame of Nature, and yet no body has heard me utter a single syllable all this while.

Paris, 17th of the Moon

Ramazan, 1719.

LETTER CXXVII.

Rica to ***

I Went the other day to see a large Library in a Convent of Der-vises, who are the Depositories or Trustees appointed to keep it; but they are oblig'd to let any body come in at certain hours.

Entring in, I saw a grave man walking about in the midst of numberless multitudes of Volumes; I made up to him, and desir'd him to tell me what books those were that were better bound than the rest: Sir, says he, I am here in a strange land; I do not know a single soul in it: I am frequently ask'd
the

the same questions as you now ask me; but you do not think I'll go read all these Books in order to satisfie them: my Library-Keeper shall answer your question; for he is employed night and day in unfolding these things: he's a good-for-nothing wretch, and a dead weight upon our hands, for he does not work for the Convent; but hark, the bell rings for dinner; such as are at the head of a Community, as I am, ought ever to be the first at all the Exercises. This said, the Monk pushed me out, looks fast the door, and in a moment disappeared as if he had flown upon the wings of the wind.

Paris, 12th of March.
I Remain, &c.
LET-
the

LETTER CXXVII.

Rica to the same.

THE next day I went again to this Library, where I found quite another man from him I had seen the day before: he had an Air of simplicity, his Physiognomy sprightly, and his address easy. As soon as I had made him acquainted with my business, which was no more than to know what those fine gilt Books were, he prepar'd to satisfy my curiosity; and being I was a stranger, he was so kind as to take some pains to instruct me. Father, says I to him, what are those bulky Volumes that fill all this side of the Library? They are, says he to me, the Interpreters of the Scripture. There's a world of them, says I; the Scripture must needs have been very dark in former times, and very clear now; are there any doubts still

still remaining to be solv'd? are there any Points still contested? Points still contested? Good God, Points still contested! answers he: why there are as many as there are lines. Ay, says I to him, and pray what have all these Authors been doing? These Authors, replies he, have not been seeking in the Scriptures for what ought to be believ'd, but for what they themselves believe; they have not look'd upon it as a Book containing the Doctrines which they ought to receive, but as a work that might give authority to their own conceits: and this has made them corrupt the sense thereof in every part, and put to the rack every individual passage in it: it is a Country, where men of all Sects make descents, and go to it as to a place of plunder: it is a Field of battle, wherein all Nations encounter, joyn frequent battle, fall foul upon one another, and skirmish in a thousand different ways.

Next

Next them, you see the Ascetics, or books of Devotion: and there, books of Morality of far greater use: now come those of Theology; doubly unintelligible; both for the matter they treat of, and the manner they treat it in. The Works of the *Mysticks*, that is to say, the Devotees with a tender heart. Dear Father, says I to him, stop a little: let me hear something of these same *Mysticks*. Sir, says he, Devotion warms a heart that's dispos'd to tenderness, and causes it to send up to the Brain Spirits, whereby the Brain is in like manner heated; from whence arise Ecstasies and rapturous Transports. This condition is the Delirium of Devotion: it oftentimes improves, or rather degenerates, into Quietism: you know a Quietist is made up of a Madman, a Devotee, and a Libertine.

Those yonder are the Casuists, that disclose to the day the secrets of the night; that form in their

imagination all the monsters the *Demon of Love* is capable of producing, which they bring together, compare them, and make them the eternal object of their thoughts: 'Tis well if their heart is not an accomplice in the abuse, and joins with and promotes all those excesses so naturally describ'd, and so nakedly painted.

You see, Sir, I am a Free-thinker, and speak without reserve: I am, by nature, plain hearted; much more towards you who are a stranger, desirous to know things, and to know them as they really are in themselves. I might, if I'd had a mind to it, have spoke these things to you in the height of admiration; I might have said at every word, this is Divine, that's venerable, the other marvellous: and the consequence of all this had been, either I must have thought you a Fool, or you me a Knave.

Here

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Here we broke off: an unexpected business call'd away the Dervise, and so we adjourn'd our conversation to the next day.

Paris, 23^d of the Moon
Ramazan, 1719.

LETTER CXXIX.

Rica to the same.

I Came again at the appointed hour, and was led by my man exactly to the same place where we parted. There, says he, are the Grammarians, the Glossers, and the Commentators. Father, says I to him, is it not possible for these Gentry to be without a word of Sense? Yes, says he, they may very easily be without it; nor indeed does it appear that they have any: and yet their works are never a whit the worse for it; which is a great conveniency to them.

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That is very true, said I to him : and I know several Philosophers that would do very well to apply themselves to these sorts of Sciences.

Those there, said he, are the O-rators, that have the faculty of Persuasion, without the help of reasoning; and the Geometricians, who oblige a man, in spite of himself, to be perswaded, and force him to be convinc'd, like so many tyrants. Those there are Meta-physicsks, that handle high matters, and wherein you meet with Infinite at every step you take : Yonder are the Naturalists, who will needs have it there is as much of the Marvellous in the simplest Machine of our Mechanicks, as in the Oeconomy of the vast Universe. Books of Medicine, those monuments of the imbecility of Nature, and of the power of Art, which make mankind tremble when they treat even of the slightest distempers, as if Death was at our elbow,

elbow; but which restore us again to a perfect security, when they talk of the vertue of Medicines, as if we were become immortal.

Close by these, you see the books of Anatomy, nothing near so copious in describing the parts of the Human body, as in giving them hard names; which neither cure the Patient's distemper, nor the Physician's ignorance.

There's Chymistry for you, that dwells sometimes in a Goal, and sometimes in a Mad-house; both of them mansions equally proper for its reception.

Those there are the books of Occult Science, or rather Ignorance: they deal in a sort of Witchcraft, execrable in most people's opinions, but in mine lamentable. Such likewise are the books of Judicial Astrology. How say you, Father? of Judicial Astrology? reply'd I, with some emotion: why those are the books that are in most esteem with us in *Persia*:

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they regulate every action of our lives, and determine us in all our undertakings: Astrologers are properly our Directors; nay more, they share in the Government of the State. If it be so, reply'd he, you live under a worse yoke than that of Reason; for this is the strangest Empire of all Empires: I heartily pity a Family, and much more a whole Nation, that yields itself to be so tyranniz'd over by the Planets. To which I reply'd, We make use of Astrology, as you do of Algebra: every Nation has its peculiar Science, according to which it regulates its Politicks: all the Astrologers put together never committed so many follies in *Persia*, as one single Algebrist of yours has done here. Think you that the fortuitous concurrence of the Stars is not as sure a rule to go by, as the fine reasonings of your System-maker? Were the voices to be gathered upon this subject in *France* and *Persia*, it would

would afford a glorious field of triumph to Astrology: you'd see the Mathematicians humbled with a vengeance: what knock-down Corollaries would they draw out against them?

Our dispute was interrupted, and so we parted.

Paris, 26th of the Moon
Rhamazan, 1718.

LETTER CXXX.

Rica to the same.

THE next time we met, my learned conductor led me into a private Closet. These, said he, are the books of modern History: first and foremost behold the Historians of the Church and the Popes; Books which I read to edify by, but which very often have a quite contrary effect upon me.

224 Persian Letters.

Yonder are those that have writ of the decay of the formidable Roman Empire, which sprung out of the ruins of so many Monarchies; and upon the fall whereof so many new ones were form'd: an infinite number of barbarous Nations, as unknown as the Countries they inhabited, started up on a sudden, overrun it, ravag'd it, pull'd it to pieces, and founded those Kingdoms which you now see in *Europe*: properly speaking, these People were not Barbarians, because they were free: but they became so afterwards, when they submitted to an absolute Power; as most of 'em did, and lost that glorious liberty, so conformable to reason, humanity and nature.

Those there are the Historians of *Germany*, an Empire which is but a faint shadow of the first Empire; but which, in my opinion, is the only power upon Earth that has not been weakned by disunion, nay more, the only one that gathers strength in proportion to her losses; and

and which, though slow in improving advantages, becomes invincible by its defeats.

Here you have the Historians of France, where at first you see the power of the Kings in the *Emerye*; twice they dye and revive again, then for several ages together you find them in a languishing condition; but insensibly gaining strength and accretion from all parts, at last it climbs to its utmost Pinnacle; like certain Rivers which in their course lose their Waters, or conceal themselves beneath the Earth; then appearing again, and being swell'd with the accession of other Rivers, they violently sweep away whatever opposes their passage.

The next I present you with is the *Spanish* Nation sallying out of Mountains: the *Mahometan* Princes as insensibly reduced as they had rapidly conquer'd: so many Kingdoms reunited under one vast Monarchy, which was become almost

the only Monarchy in the world; till, overcharg'd with its false opulence, she lost her strength, and even her reputation, and preserved nothing but the pride of her first prowess.

Those there are the Historians of *England*, wherein you see liberty incessantly rising out of the flames of discord and sedition; the Prince continually tottering upon an immoveable Throne; an impatient People, wise in the midst of madness, and which, being mistress of the Sea (a thing never before heard of) intermixes Commerce with Empire.

Next them are the Historians of that other Queen of the Sea, the Republick of *Holland*, so respected in *Europe*, and so formidable in *Asia*, where her Factors behold Kings prostrate at their feet.

The Historians of *Italy* set before your eyes a Nation once Mistress of the World; now a slave

to all other Nations; her Princes
disunited and impotent, and having
no other attribute of Sovereignty
but an empty speculative Polity.

See here the Historians of the
Republicks; *Switzerland*, the Image
of liberty; *Venice*, whose whole
support lies in her Oeconomy; and
Genoa, that has nothing to boast of
but her Buildings.

Here you have those of the North;
and among others *Poland*, who
makes so ill an use of her liberty,
and of the privilege she has in e-
lecting her Kings, it looks as if she
had a mind thereby to comfort her
neighbours for the loss of both.

Here we parted, upon promise to
meet again the next day.

Paris, 22 of the Month

Chalval, 1719.

LET.

LETTER CXXXI.

Rica to the same.

THE next day he took me into another Closet. These are the Poets, said he, that is to say those Authors whose trade it is to put shackles upon good sense, and smother reason with heaps of flowers; as was the custom formerly to bury women beneath their Ornaments and fine Cloaths: you know 'em well enough, they are not uncommon among you Orientals, where a hotter Sun seems to fire the very Imaginations of you.

Here are the Epic Poems. Epic Poems, says I? what are they? In troth, says he, I don't know: the Critics say, there never were but two, and that all the rest that go by that name are but counterfeits: this too is what I'm equally ignorant of: they say further, 'tis impossible to
make

make any more of the sort; which is yet more surprising.

Here we have the Dramatic Poets, which in my opinion are Poets indeed, or rather may be call'd The Poets, by way of excellence; they are the masters of the Passions: there are two sorts; the Comic, which tickle us agreeably, and the Tragic which disturb us, and put us into violent agitations.

These here are the Lyricks, whom I despise as much as I esteem the others, and who make an harmonious extravagance of their Art.

Next come the Authors of Idylliums and Eclogues, which please even the Courtiers by the Idea they give them of a certain Tranquility which they have not, and which they will have to be inherent to the condition of Shepherds.

Of all the Authors that we have hitherto been turning over, we come now to the most dangerous; and they are your sharpners of Epigrams:

A

230 *Persian Letters.*

A sort of fine, small dart, which makes a deep wound not to be reach'd by any medicine.

Here you see the Romancers, a species of Poets, and who strain alike both the language of the mind, and that of the heart; who spend their lives in seeking after Nature and never find her, and who create Heroes as unaccountably monstrous as winged Dragons and *Hippocentaurs*.

I have seen, says I, some of your Romances; and were you to see ours you would be much more shock'd at 'em, they are full as unnatural, and are over and above extremely cramped by our manners: a ten years passion is requir'd before a Lover can see so much as his Mistress's Face: all this while the Authors are forc'd to entertain the Readers with these tedious Preliminaries: now it being impossible to vary the incidents, recourse is had to an artifice, or remedy still worse than the distemper; namely,
 Pro-

Prodigies: I'm well assur'd you will not approve of an Enchantress conjuring up Armies out of the Bowels of the Earth; or that one single Heroe should destroy another Army consisting of an hundred thousand Men: yet these are our Romances: these insipid and reiterated adventures make us dull, and these extravagant Prodigies are perfectly shocking.

Paris, 6th of the Moon
Chalval, 1718.

LETTER CXXXII.

Rica to Ibben, at Smirna.

THE Ministers succeed each other, and drive one another out like the Seasons. Within these three years have I seen four several changes in the system of the Finances. In Persia and in Turkey the subsidies are to this day levy'd in the same

same manner as the Founders of those Monarchies us'd to levy them: it is far from being so here. 'Tis true, we don't use so much art in this affair as the *Europeans*: we are of opinion, that the difference between administering the Revenues of a Prince, and those of a private Man, is no more than there is between reckoning up a hundred thousand Tomans, or a hundred. But here in this Country there is a great deal more of *finasse* and mystery. Great Genius's must work night and day, and be incessantly conceiving, and bringing forth with pain new projects; must hearken to the advice of multitudes of people that work for 'em without being desir'd, must withdraw and lock themselves in a Closet impenetrable to the great, and rever'd by the little; must always have their Heads fill'd with important secrets, miraculous Plans, new Schemes; and swallowed up in meditation, must not only be depriv'd of the use of speech,

speech, but even sometimes of good manners.

As soon as the late King's eyes were clos'd, a new administration was to be establish'd; affairs were visibly in a bad condition; but how to make 'em better was a task they knew not how to go about: People were displeas'd at the unlimited Authority of the preceding Ministers; a resolution was therefore taken to divide the Ministry; to this purpose six or seven Counsels were created: and this Ministry is perhaps that which of all others has govern'd *France* in the most rational manner. Its duration was short, as well as that of the benefits it produc'd.

France at the death of the late King was a Body labouring under a thousand distempers: N * * * took her cure in hand, cut away the superfluous flesh, and apply'd some topical remedies: but still there remain'd an interior malady. A foreigner came and undertook the

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the cure : after using a great many violent Medicines, he thought he had restor'd her to a good plight ; but 'twas false Fat ; he only bloated her.

They that were rich Men six months ago, are now fallen into poverty ; and such as had not bread to eat, now wallow in Riches. Never were these two extremes so contiguous before. This Foreigner has turn'd the State, as a Taylor turns an old Coat ; what was undermost he makes uppermost, and what was uppermost he puts undermost. The unexpected Fortunes that have been made ! incredible even to those that possess 'em ! The Almighty did not with more rapidity create men out of nothing. How many Footmen are now serv'd by their Fellow-servants, and perhaps to-morrow by their Masters !

This oftentimes occasions odd accidents. Footmen that had made their fortunes in the last Reign now bragg of their Birth : they bestow

bestow upon those that have just laid aside their Livery, the same contempt themselves were in six months before; they make a noise, that Gentility is utterly undone, and there's nothing but confusion in the State: all distinction at an end! no respect paid to Men of Rank! none but Upstarts to be seen! sprung up in a night like Mushrooms! I doubt not but these latter will take their full revenge upon those that come after them, and that in thirty years time these Men of quality will make no little noise.

Paris, the 1st of the Moon

Zilcade, 1729.

LET

LETTER CXXXIII.

Rica to the same.

BEhold a great example of conjugal Love, not only in a Woman, but in a Queen. The Queen of *Sweden* being resolv'd to make the Prince her Husband a partner in the Throne, in order to remove all difficulties, has sent to the States a declaration, whereby she desists from all pretensions to the Regency, provided they will elect him their King.

Sixty years ago or thereabouts, another Queen, whose name was *Christina*, abdicated the Crown, that so she might entirely give herself up to Philosophy. I know not which of these two examples we are to admire most.

Though I am sufficiently satisfied that every individual ought to stick to the station where Nature has plac'd him ; and can by no means
com-

commend such as, finding themselves reduc'd, quit their posts by a kind of desertion; yet am I wonderfully pleas'd with the greatness of Soul of these two Princesses; and to see the Mind of the one, and the Heart of the other so much superior to their fortune. *Gibrifina* apply'd her self to Speculation, at a time when others think of nothing but Pleasure: and the other thinks no Pleasure equal to that of placing her whole happiness in the hands of her August Spouse.

Paris, 27th of the Moon

Maharram, 1720.

LETTER CXXXIV.

Rica to Usbek.

THE Parliament of *Paris* is just now banish'd to a little Town call'd *Pontoise*. The Council have sent

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sent to 'em, to register a Declaration which dishonours them ; and they have register'd it in such a manner as dishonours the Council.

Some other Parliaments of the Kingdom are threatned with the like treatment.

Parliaments are always odious : they never approach the King, but to tell him disagreeable truths : and whilst a croud of Courtiers are continually representing to him a People happy under his Government ; these come and contradict the flattery, and throw at the foot of the Throne the groans and tears committed to their charge.

'Tis a heavy burthen, my dear *Usbek*, that of Truth, when it must be carried up to Princes ; who ought to consider, that they who do it are constrain'd thereto, and that they would never be prevail'd upon to do a thing so melancholy, and so afflicting to those who do it,
were

were they not oblig'd to it by their duty, their respect, and even their love.

Paris, the 21st of the Moon

Gemmadi 1. 1742

LETTER CXXXV.

Rica to Usbek.

Toward the end of the week I will come and see thee; O how agreeably will the hours slide away in thy conversation!

Not long ago I was introduc'd to a Court-Lady, who had a mind to see my outlandish figure: I found her beautiful, worthy of the Regards of our Monarch, and of holding an August Rank in the sacred place where his heart reposeth.

She ask'd me a thousand questions about *Persia*, and what manner of life the *Persian* Women led: I found that the Seraglio was not what

240 *Perſian Antreſs.*

what ſhe liked; and that ſhe diſap-
 proved of one man being divided
 between ten or twelve women.
 She could not without envy behold
 the happineſs of the one, nor with-
 out pity the condition of the o-
 thers. As ſhe lov'd reading, eſpe-
 cially the Poets and Romances, ſhe
 deſir'd me to give her ſome account
 of ours: what I ſaid of them re-
 doubled her curioſity: ſhe begg'd
 I would tranſlate for her a ſug-
 ment of ſome of thoſe which I
 had brought along with me. I did
 ſo, and ſome days after ſent her a
Perſian Tale perhaps thou wilt
 not be diſpleas'd to ſee it in this
 diſguiſe.

In the days of *Chah-Alh-Gan*,
 there liv'd a woman in *Perſia*, whoſe
 name was *Zulema*, ſhe could repeat
 the whole *Alcoran* from one end
 to the other: there was not a *Per-
 ſian* that better underſtood the tra-
 ditions of the Holy Prophets: there
 was nothing ſo myſterious in the
Arabian Doctors, which ſhe did not
 fully

fully comprehend the meaning of :
and to this knowledge was added
a sprightliness of wit, which made
it difficult to guess whether she
meant to amuse or instruct those she
convers'd with.

One day being with her compa-
nions, in an apartment of the Se-
raglio, one of 'em ask'd her what
she thought of a future state? and
whether she believ'd that ancient
tradition of our Doctors, that Pa-
radise is for none but Men.

It is the vulgar Opinion, says
she to them, there has been no
stone unturn'd to degrade our sex :
nay there's a Nation, dispers'd
throughout all *Asia*, call'd the
Jewish Nation, who assert from the
Authority of their sacred Books,
that we women have no Souls.

These injurious opinions have no
other foundation, but the pride of
men, who are for extending their Su-
periority, even beyond the limits of
Life ; never considering that, in the
Great Day, all Creatures shall ap-

not before God; and for as much
 as all things will begin among
 them, my mother will be the
 regenerate; and they shall rise from
 the dead, and Key in their chains,
 and God will be limited in his
 power; and as the men that have
 the right of the power, and have made
 use of the power, they have given
 here: he will be in Paradise, and
 replenished with celestial and
 mortal beauties, and such as if a
 mortal had beheld them, he would
 have given himself immediate death
 to go to see them; for in like manner
 shall virtuous women go to the
 places of Delights, where they shall
 be delighted with full draughts of
 Pleasure, and company of those de-
 vices, who shall be subjected
 unto them; each woman shall have
 a Sotagird, wherein she shall
 be that she may see hundreds far more
 worthy than ours to look after them.
 and when we read, we do see, in an
 Arabian Book, of a certain man
 named *Abdullah*, who was in support-
 able

ably jealous: he had Ovels & vines,
 all exceeding beautiful, in whose
 wild aspect they libvent; manners he
 should blind ways: kept: them under
 Lock and Key in their Chamber,
 where they could neither see him,
 nor speak to one another; & so he
 was even jealous of his innocent
 friendship: all his actions had a
 saintly & his natural brutish: & no
 kind word & never said out of his
 mouth; & and never did he make the
 least sign with his hand, or the
 least nod with his head, which
 did not add something to his rigour
 of their slavery. Now about this last
 day, that they were all to
 goe to the Hall of the Stragles,
 obedient, & holden than the rest,
 upbraided him for his ill nature.
 Says she to him, When people study
 so much to make themselves great,
 & in his ambition they have lost
 something for which they show
 they're, but to be live so very un-
 happy, that we can't help desiring a
 change in others, in my place, should
 ylds L 2 wish

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with your death: I only with my
own. This Speech, which ought
to have soften'd him, put him into
a violent rage; he drew his Dag-
ger, and bury'd it in her Bosom.
My dear companions, said she, with
a dying voice, if Heaven has pity
of my Virtue, you will be reveng'd:
saying thus, she left this worthless
world, to go to the Mansions of
Delight, where such women as have
past a well spent life enjoy a Bliss
which is continually renewing.
The first thing she saw was a
smiling meadow, whose verdure
was enamel'd with variety of the
liveliest and most fragrant flowers:
a brook, whose stream, more tran-
sparent than Crystal, made its way
thro' infinite turnings and windings:
afterwards she enter'd into these
charming bowers, whose silence
was only interrupted with the
melodious warbling of birds: then
sumptuous gardens presented them-
selves to her view: Nature had ad-
orn'd them with her simplicity,

and

and the utmoſt magnificence: then ſhe proceeded to a ſtately Palace prepar'd for her, crowded with heavenly men, that were deſtin'd for her delight.

Two of theſe immediately began to undreſs her: others put her into the Bath, and perſum'd her all over with the moſt delicious eſſences: then they preſented her with a Habit infinitely richer than her own: afterwards they led her into a ſpacious Hall, where ſhe found a fire made with Aromatic Woods, and a table ſpread with the moſt exquisite dainties. Every thing ſeem'd to conſpire to tranſport her ſenſes: on the one hand was heard Muſic, ſo much the more divine, as it was ſoft: on the other, ſhe beheld nothing but the dances of thoſe divine men, whoſe ſole buſineſs was to pleaſure her. Yet as thoſe Pleaſures were only in order to lead her inſenſibly to others far greater: ſhe was conducted into a Chamber, and after once more uncloathing her,

He was laid on a rich Bed, where
 two young, inexpressibly handsome,
 receiv'd her in their arms; and here
 she was ravish'd, and her ecsta-
 cies exceeded even her desires. I
 am quite besides my self, says she
 to them; O I believe I should die,
 were I not assur'd of my immor-
 tality: 'tis too much; let me go. I
 am convuls'd with the violent delight.
 So, 'tis done; you now restore a
 little Calm to my senses; I begin
 to breathe, and come again to my
 self. Y. Why have they taken
 away the Light? why may I not
 now survey your divine beauty?
 Why may I not see like I do to
 what purpose? You again throw
 me back into my first transports.
 O ye Gods, how amiable is this
 Darkness? what shall I do immor-
 tal? and with you good and study. I.
 Now I ask you pardon of Gentle-
 men; for I plainly see you will not
 vask mine. After many reiterated commands,
 she was obey'd; but not till she

was

was seriously resolv'd to be; she
 repos'd her self in a languishing
 manner, and slumber'd in their
 arms. Two moments past repair'd
 her faintness: she receiv'd two
 kisses, which of a sudden re-inflam'd
 her, and caus'd her to open her
 eyes. I am uneasy, says she; I'm
 afraid you cease to love me. This
 was no Doubt, wherein she re-
 solv'd not long to continue; where-
 upon they gave her all the satisfac-
 tion she could wish. I am unde-
 ceiv'd, said she. I try ye mercy:
 I can depend upon you. You speak
 not one word to me, but your
 actions I like better than any thing
 you could say. Yes, yes, I frankly
 own, never was love like yours:
 but how! you both contend for
 the honour of persuading me! ah!
 if you thus contend, if your joint
 ambition to the pleasure of my a-
 warthrow, is all that's done; you'll
 both remain Conquerors, and only
 I be conquer'd; but you shall pur-
 chase the Victory very dear.

This Scene was interrupted by nothing but the Day-light: her faithful lovely Domestick came into her Chamber, and rais'd those two young men, who were led by two old ones to the respective places where they were kept for Pleasure. She afterwards got up, and at first shew'd her self to that idolatrous Court, in all the Charms of a plain Undress; and afterwards dress'd in the most sumptuous Ornaments. This Night had burnish'd her Beauty: it had given life to her Complexion, and expression to her Graces. All the day was spent in Dances, Consorts, Banquets, Gamings, and the like: and 'twas observ'd, that *Anais* stole away from time to time, and flew to her two young Heroes; after some precious moments of converse, she return'd to the company she had quitted, always with a serener countenance than before. To cut short, towards the evening they lost her for good and all; she went and shut her self

up

up in the Seraglio, whether she
told them she would go and con-
tract Acquaintance with those im-
mortal Captives, who were to live
for ever with her; she therefore
visited the most retir'd, and the
most charming apartments of the
place, where she reckon'd up fifty
Slaves miraculously beautiful. She
stay'd all night from Chamber to
Chamber, every where receiving
their homage, always different, and
always the same.

Thus you see how the immortal
Amir pass'd her life; sometimes a-
midst the splendid pleasures, some-
times amidst the solitary: either
admir'd by a shining company, or
else caress'd by a Lover untractably
fond of her; oftentimes she would
forsake the enchanted Palace, and
remove into a Sylvan Grotto: the
flowers seem'd to grow from every
step she took; and the Loves and
Sports presented themselves in
crowds to meet her on the way.
More than eight days she continu'd

in this happy abode; and all that while, being continually beside her self, she had not made the least reflection. She had enjoyed her happiness without knowing it, or without having had so much as one of those quiet moments wherein the Soul does as it were call her self to account, and gives it self audience amidst the silence of the passions.

The Bless have Pleasures so strong, that they rarely can enjoy this liberty of the mind: hence it is, that being inexpressibly attach'd to present objects, they intirely lose the memory of things past; and retain no longer any regard to what they knew or lov'd in the other world.

But *Mas*, whose mind was truly philosophical, had pass'd almost her whole Life in meditation: she had carry'd her reflections much further, than one would have expected from a woman left to her self. The austere retreat which

which her husband had confin'd her so, had procur'd her no other advantage but this: 'twas this force and strength of mind, which had made her slight the fear her Companions were struck with; and despite Death, which was to end her sufferings, and begin her Eternity.

Thus by little and little she waded out of the ebriety of Pleasure, and lockt her self up, alone, in an apartment of her Palace. She gave a loose to pleasing reflections upon her past condition, and her present happiness: she could not forbear pitying the misfortune of her Companions: 'tis natural to compassionate the pains we ourselves have pass'd through. *Angis* kept not within the bare bounds of Compassion; being mov'd with Tenderness towards those unhappy Creatures, she found her self inclin'd to relieve them.

She order'd one of those young Men that were about her, to assume

time the shape of her Husband; she had him go to the Seraglio, seize it, turn him out of it, and continue there in his Place till such time as she recalled him.

The execution was speedy; he ran the Air; arriv'd at the Gate of the Seraglio, but *Ibrahim* was not there. He knocks; the Door fly open; the Eunuks prostrate themselves at his Feet; he hurries to the Apartments where *Ibrahim's* women were shut up; he had before taken the Keys out of the Pocket of that jealous pated wretch; to whom he had made himself invisible. He goes in; he much surprizes em with his mild and affable Air, and yet more with his Fondness, and the rapidity of his Careless; they were all equally astonish'd at his performances, and would have taken it for a Dream, had there been less of reality in it.

Whilst these new scenes were playing in the Seraglio, *Ibrahim* knocks, names himself to them, storms

storm and makes a clamor: after
he had gone through a world of
difficulties, he enters, and puts the
Eunuchs into a terrible disorder:
he fetches large strides: but starts
back, and falls as from the clouds
when he sees the false *Ibrahim*, his
real Image, enjoying all the liber-
ties of a Master. He calls out for
help: he bids the Eunuchs assist
him in killing that Impostor; but
he is not obey'd: there's nothing
now remains but one remedy, and
that a very poor one, which is, to
refer it to the Judgment of his wo-
men.

In the space of an Hour the
false *Ibrahim* had corrupted all his
Judges: the other is driven away,
and ignominiously dragg'd out of
the Scramble, and had receiv'd a
thousand Deaths, had not his Rival
order'd his life to be spard: at
length the new *Ibrahim*, remaining
Master of the Field of Battle,
shew'd himself more and more
worthy of the choice they had
made,

hide, & did signaliz'd himself by
 miracles till then unknown. You
 are not like *Abraham*, said the women:
 He is not like me; you mean, cries
 the triumphing *Abraham*. What
 must a man do to prove himself
 yours, if what he does suffices not?
 Far be it from us to doubt it,
 say the women, if you are not
Abraham, we are satisfy'd you have
 well deserv'd to be him: you are
 more our Spouse in one Day, than
 he has been in the course of ten
 Years. Then you'll give me your
 word, cry'd they, that you'll declare
 your selves in my favour, against
 that Impostor. We do, we do,
 said they, with one voice; we'll
 take an Oath of everlasting fidelity
 to you: we have been but too long
 abus'd in the old Rogue did not at
 all suspect our virtue; he only sus-
 pected in his own inconstancy; we
 plainly see, that Men are other-
 wise Creatures than he is; no,
 and you they are like: O could
 you but know how much you
 make

make us hate him — Well, I'll
 give you cause enough and more
 to hate him, I reply'd the false
Arabs you don't yet know how
 much he has wrong'd you. We
 judge of his injustice by the great-
 ness of our revenge, cry'd they.
 Yes, says the Divine Man, you're
 in the right, proportion'd the ex-
 piation to the crime, I'm mighty
 glad my way of punishing has
 pleas'd you. But, I said they, sup-
 pose this impostor should return,
 what shall we do then? I believe,
 answer'd he, it would be a hard
 matter for him to deceive you in
 the part I have acted. His Black
 hardly to be supply'd by artifice,
 and besides, I'll send him packing
 so far, you shall never more hear of
 him. then will I take your happi-
 ness into my care, you shall not
 find Me jealous, I shall know how
 to be secure of you without con-
 fining you. I have no good op-
 inion of my own merit, so I think
 you will prove false to me if you
 make
 are

are not virtuous with me, with whom will you be so? This conversation lasted some time between him and those women, who being more pleas'd with the difference of the two *Ibrahim*s than their resemblance, did not concern themselves so much about having these mysteries cleared up to them. At length the Husband at his wit's end returns once more upon them, to interrupt their pleasures: he found the whole House swimming with joy, and the women more incredulous than ever. 'Twas no place for a jealous Man: out he goes in a rage, and a moment after the false *Ibrahim* follows him, lays hold on him, transports him through the Air, and leaves him four hundred Leagues from the Place.

O Gods! in what affliction were these women by the absence of their dear *Ibrahim*! Already had their Eunuchs reasum'd their natural Severity: the whole House was in tears: sometimes they imagin'd, all that

had

had happen'd to 'em was nothing
 a Dream: they look'd at each o-
 ther: and recall'd to mind the mi-
 nutest circumstances of those won-
 derful Adventures. At last *Ibrahim*
 returns to 'em more amiable than
 before; it seem'd to them as if his
 Voyage had not been in the least
 laborious: the new Master behav'd
 so different from the other, he sur-
 priz'd the whole Neighbourhood.
 He turn'd away all his Eunuchs;
 made his House free to every body;
 he wou'd not suffer his women so
 much as to be veil'd; 'twas a thing
 entirely new to see Them at public
 Entertainments amongst the men,
 and as free as they. *Ibrahim* believ'd,
 with reason, that the customs of
 the Country were not for such Ci-
 tizens as he. Mean while he spar'd
 for no expence, he made the Estate
 fly; insomuch that the jealous *I-*
brahim returning three Years after
 wards from foreign Countries, whe-
 ther he had been carry'd, found
 no-
 sometimes they imagin'd all that
 had

nothing left but his Wives and six
and thirty Children.

Paris, the 16th of the Moon

Gemmad 1177

L E T T E R C X X X V I

Rica to Usbek.

I N C L O S E D is a Letter I re-

ceiv'd yesterday from a Virtuoso:
it will appear to thee to be a pretty
odd one.

S I R

Six months ago I took possession of

an Estate which an Uncle of mine,

very rich when he was alive, left

me five hundred thousand Livres,

and a House gloriously furnished.

There is a pleasure in having an Estate
when a Man knows how to make a
right Use of it. I am without ambi-
tion, nor have I a taste for pleasures.
Money that were current two thousand
years since they imagin'd

I am almost continually lockt up in a Closet, where I live the Life of a *Per-
tuofo*; here you may find a curious
 Lover of venerable Antiquity.

When my Uncle had breath'd his
 last, I would have interr'd him accord-
 ing to the Ceremonies observ'd by the
 ancient Greeks and Romans; but at
 that time I had no Lachrymatories, no
 Urns, no *antick* Lamps.

But I have since fully furnish'd my-
 self with those valuable Rarities: a
 few Days ago I sold a whole Cupboard
 of *Piste*, to purchase an Earthen Lamp
 that belong'd to a Stoick Philosopher.
 I parted with all the Peer-Glasses, and
 Sconces, with which almost all the
 Walls of my Uncle's Apartments were
 cover'd, in exchange for a small Pocket
 Looking-Glass, somewhat crackt, which
 Mingil heretofore made use of. I am
 oblig'd when I behold my own im-
 ager *representations*, instead of that of the
 Mannaan Swan. More than this, I
 have purchas'd for a hundred Louis-
 d'ors *four or five* *Pietres* of Copper-
 Money that were current two thousand
 Years

Years ago. I don't know at present
 that I have in my whole House so
 much as one Manuscript, but what was
 made before the destruction of the Em-
 pire. I have a Casket of invaluable
 Manuscripts: though I almost strain
 my Eyes out of my Head to read them,
 I had much rather peruse Them than
 the Printed Copies, which are not so
 correct, and which every body is pos-
 sessed of. Though I never stir abroad,
 yet have I a most inordinate Passion
 to know the Roman High-ways.
 There is a Causey not far from me,
 that was made about twelve hundred
 Years ago by a Proconsul of Gaul:
 whenever I go to my Country House,
 I never fail to go that way, though
 it is three miles about, and very rugged:
 but what makes me mad is that they
 have put up wooden Posts from place
 to place, to mark out the distance of
 the Neighbouring Towns. I am out
 of my wits, to see such wretched In-
 dices, instead of Millitary Columns
 which stood there in ancient times:
 I know not but I may cause 'em to be

replaced by my Flattery and engagements
to do it when I come to make my
Will. If you have a Son, furnish
thing as a Persian Manuscript, you
will do me a singular Pleasure to ac-
commodate me with it: you shall know
what Price you'll please to put upon
it. I will present you, in a word, with
gain, with some of my own Perfor-
mances, whereby you'll see I am no
useless member of the Republic of
Letters: you will there find, among o-
ther things, a Dissertation, wherein
I prove, that the Crown which us'd
to be worn in Triumphs, was of Oak-
leaves, not Laurel. You will likewise
admire another, wherein I prove, by
learned conjectures drawn from the
gravest Greek Authors, that Camby-
ses was wounded in the Left Leg,
not the Right. I know, wherein I
prove, that a low Forehead was es-
teem'd a singular Beauty among the
Romans. I will likewise send you a
Hecate in Quatre by way of expli-
cation of one Verse of the Sixth Book of
Virgil's *Aeneid*, all which you can
have

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have yet. So at present I shall only
send you a fragment of an ancient
Greek Mythologist, which never to
this day was made public, and which
I found among the rubbish of a
certain Library. It is called away
upon an important business which I
have upon my Hands. It is to relate
a fine Passage of Pliny the Natur-
alist, which the Transcribers of the
Fifth Age have monstrously disfigured.
I am, &c.

**FRAGMENT of an Ancient
MYTHOLOGIST.**

IN an Island near the Orca-
des, there was born a Male-child, who
belonged to his Father Aeolus God of the
Winds, and for his Mother a Nymph
of Caledonia. It is said that he
learned of himself to count with his
Fingers, and when he was but four
Years old would so perfectly distinguish
Metals, that his Mother one Day giv-
ing him a Brass Ring instead of a Gold
one,

Riches

one he discovered the Chear, and
threw it away, imagining it was his
of which he was grieved up, his
that taught him the secret of stopping
the Wind in a Leather Bottle, which
he afterwards sold to Sea-men and o-
thers that had occasion for it: but
this being a Commodity not much
sought in his Country, he visited it,
and went and roamed about the world
in company with the blind God of
Chance.

He was inform'd in his Travels,
that Boetia was a Country full of
Gold: this made him hasten thither as
fast as he could. He met with a very
cold reception from Saturn then reign-
ing, but that God for saking the Earth,
he took it in his hand, and put it into all the
Crosse ways, where he had never seen
before, and in a house, deep-mouth'd
Bastard People of Boetia, who said
your selves were the Rich, because you
have Gold and Silver, I say your
Riches are but by the hand of the
Deity, and come from the Empire of
Imagination, to have you shall meet with
Riches

Richer, that will surprise even You.
And then he open'd a good many of his
Leather Botles, and distributed his
Merchandise to as many as desir'd
it.

Next Day he return'd again to the
same Place, and rear'd out: People of
Boetia, have you a mind to be Rich?
Do but fancy me to be so, and that
you are so too: only take it into your
heads every Morning, that your For-
tune was doubled during the Night;
then get out of your Beds, and if you
have any Creditors, go and pay them
with this imaginary Coin, and bid
them go and set their Imaginations at
work, as you have done.

Some Days afterwards he comes a-
gain, and thus accosts them, People of
Boetia, I find your Imagination is not
so strong as it was at first: let mine
be your Guide: I will every Morning
set before your Eyes a Scroll that shall
be to you a Spring of Wealth: it con-
sists but of four words; but they shall
be to the purpose, for they shall regu-
late your Daughters Portions, your
Sons

Reverend Letters. 265

See Fortune, the Number of your Domesticks, and as for you, say to those that come nearest to him: as for you, my Dear Children, I may call you by that Name, for you owe to me a second Birth: my Scroll will determine the Magnificence of your Equipage, the Sumptuousness of your Purbeck Entertainments, the Number and Stipends of your respective Mistresses.

Some Days after this he comes to the same Place again, quite out of Breath, and in a transport of Passion cry'd out: People of Boetica, I before counsel'd you to imagine, and you would not; I now Command you to do it. Here he left them abruptly: but, upon second Thoughts, return'd again: I understand that some among you are so obstinate as to preferre your Gold and Silver: as for the Silver, no matter, but for the Gold. . . . the Gold that rais'd my Indignation. I swear by these sacred Bottles, that if they do not come and bring it me, I will severely punish em. Thus

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he added, with an Air perfectly persuasive, Do you think it is so keep these vile Metals, that I ask them of you? No; and for a Mark of my sincerity, when you brought them to me the other Day, did I not immediately return you one Half of them?

Next Day he was discover'd at a distance, insinuating himself with a smooth and flattering Speech: People of Boetica, I am inform'd that part of your Effects is in foreign Countries: pray send for them; I beg you wou'd bring them to me, and I shall be for ever thankful to you for the Favour.

The Son of Æolus talk'd to People who had no great stomach to laugh, and yet they could not forbear it; which confounded him not a little: but again taking heart he ventured one more small Petition. I know that you have Jewels: in the Name of Jupiter, away with those Jewels; nothing is more impoverishing than such trash; away with 'em, I say; delay not a moment to part with them; if you can't do it your selves, I'll help you to Men of understanding

derstanding that shall do it for you: oh! what floods of wealth will come pouring in upon you, if you but take my Advice: yes, I promise you, and you may depend upon it, the purest, the most refin'd Treasure in all these Bottles shall be yours.

At last he got upon a Joint-stool, and with a more assur'd Voice he tells them: People of Boetia, I have compar'd the happy condition you are now in with that in which I found you when I came hither: you are now the Richest people on the face of the earth: but, to compleat your Fortune, permit me to take from you a Moiety of your Estates. At these words suddenly the Son of Æolus flew away, and left his Auditors in an expressible consternation; which made him return again the next Day, and thus he spoke: I yesterday perceiv'd that my Discourse displeas'd you exceedingly. Well, let that go for nothing: 'tis true, a Moiety is too much: other expedients must be found out to compass the drift of my designs: let us bring all our Riches to

one and the same place: this we may easily do; they are not very bulky: and immediately three fourths of them vanish'd quite out of sight.

Paris, 9th of the Moon
Chabban, 1720.

LETTER CXXXVII

Rica to Nathaniel Levi, a Jew
Physician at Leghorn.

THOU askest me what I think of the Virtue of *Amulets*, and of the power of *Talismans*. Why dost thou enquire of me? thou art a Jew, and I a *Mahometan*; that is, we are both of us not a little credulous.

I always bear about me more than two thousand passages of the Holy *Alcoran*; round each of my arms is fastened a small packet, wherein are written the names of above two hundred Dervises: those of *Ali*,
Fatima,

Patina, and all the pure ones, are concealed in above twenty places of my cloaths.

And yet, I have never the worse opinion of those, who deny the virtue that we attribute to certain words: it is a much harder task for us to answer their Arguments, than it is for them to answer our Experiments. I wear about me these sacred Relicks for custom sake, and to conform to the general Practice: I believe that if they have no more virtue in them than the Rings and other Ornaments we wear for show, so neither have they less; but Thou puttest thy whole confidence in certain mysterious Letters; and without this safeguard thou wouldst be in continual apprehension.

Men are very unhappy: they do nothing but fluctuate between False Hopes and Ridiculous Fears: and instead of resting upon Reason, they create to themselves Monsters that

fear them, or Phantoms that mislead them.

What effect would'st thou have the marshalling of certain Letters to produce? and what effect dost thou expect from putting the same out of order? What relation do they bear to the Winds, that they should lay a Storm; what to Gunpowder, to damp the force thereof; what relation have they to what the Physicians call the peccant humour and the Morbific cause of Maladies, in order to their cure?

The cream of the Jest is, that those very people who fatigue their Reason to find a reference between certain Events and occult Virtues, have no less difficulty to hinder themselves from seeing the true cause thereof.

Thou wilt tell me that Sorcery has occasioned the winning of a Battle: and I tell thee, that thou must wink very hard, not to find in the situation of the ground, in the number or courage of the Soldiers,

diers, in the experience of the Captains, sufficient causes for producing that effect, of which thou art resolved not to see the cause.

I'll suppose for once there is such a thing as Witchcraft: and do you in your turn for once suppose there is no such thing; for that's not impossible: this concession which thou makest me, hinders not two Armies from fighting: wilt thou in that case have it that neither of these two can win the victory? Dost thou believe that their Fate will remain uncertain, till some invisible power comes to determine it? that every shot shall be lost, all prudence ineffectual, and all courage unserviceable?

Thinkest thou that Death, in so many hideous shapes, cannot produce in the minds of men those panick terrors which thou art at such a loss to account for? Wilt thou have it, that in an Army of an hundred thousand men, there cannot possibly be one Coward? Think-

est thou that this man's heart mis-giving him may not produce the like in another; and that the second, deserting a third, may not soon occasion him to abandon a fourth? There needs no more than this, and despair of conquering shall seize at once a whole Army; and the more numerous it is, so much the easier may this happen.

Every body knows, and every body feels, that men, like all other creatures who tend to preserve their being, are passionately fond of life. This is notorious in general: and shall we enquire wherefore, upon a particular occasion, they are afraid of losing it?

Though the sacred Books of all Nations are filled with those panie or supernatural terrors, I do not think there is any thing so trifling: because before we can be assured that an effect, which may be produc'd by a hundred thousand natural Causes, is supernatural, we must

must find out whether any of those causes omitted to act; which it is impossible to do.

I shall say no more to thee, *Nathaniel*, but only that in my opinion the subject does not deserve to be so seriously handled.

Paris, 10th of the Moon

· Chabham, 1720.

P. S. As I was concluding, I heard them cry in the street a letter from a country Physician to a Physician at *Paris*, (for here all manner of trash is printed, published, and bought up) I thought I should do well to send it thee, because it has some reference to our subject; there are a great many things in it which I do not understand; but thou, who art a Physician, must needs understand the language of the fraternity.

M S

LET

Letter from a Physician in the Country to a Physician at Paris.

THERE was a Sick Man in our town, that could get no sleep for five and thirty days together: his Physician ordered him Opium, but he could not be prevail'd upon to take it; once he had the Cup at his mouth, and then he was more irresolute than ever: at last he says to his Physician, Sir, I beg quarter only till to-morrow morning: I know a man that never practises Physick, but who has a multitude of Medicines for such as can't sleep; give me leave to send for him: and if I don't sleep to-night, I promise to go on with you. The Physician being dismiss'd, the Patient caus'd the curtains to be drawn close, and bids his Foot-boy go and fetch Mr. Anis to him. Mr. Anis comes: Dear Mr. Anis, I am a dead Man; I can't get a wink of sleep: han't you in your shop such a thing as the C. of G, or else some Book of Devotion compos'd by a reverend Father

. of

of the Society of Jesus, that you han't been able to get rid of? for oftentimes those Medicines are best that have been longest kept. Sir, says the Bookseller, I have Father Causin's Holy Court in six Volumes at your service; I will go and fetch 'em you: I hope they will do you good. If you would have the works of the reverend Father Rodrigues the Spanish Jesuit, you are welcome to them; but take my word for it, you had better stick to Father Causin; and I hope with God's Blessing one period of Father Causin will operate as much as a who'e Leaf of the C. of G. Upon this Mr. Anis runs and fetches the Medicine out of his shop. The Holy Court arrives; the dust is wip'd off; the sick Man's Son, a young School-Boy, began to read in it; he was the first it had an effect upon: at the second Page his Tongue began to falter; and now the whole Company felt themselves sinking away; the moment afterwards they all fell a snoring, except the sick Man; who, after he had

beld

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held out a long time, at last fell into a
Daze.

Early in the morning the Physician comes: Well, has he taken my Opium? no answer is made him: the Wife, the Daughter, the young Lad, all overjoy'd point to Father Causin: He askt what it was: they answer, God's Blessing on Father Causin, he shall be sent to the Binder's: who would have thought this? A miracle! a miracle! See there Sir, see Father Causin; 'twas he procured my Father this blessed nap. And so they up and told the whole thing to him, just as it happen'd.

The Physician was a deep Scholar: replete with the mysteries of the Cabala, and the power of Words and Spirits. This accident set his thoughts at work: after a little musing, he resolv'd absolutely to alter his method. Here's a very extraordinary cure, says he to himself; here's an experiment before my face; it must be push'd on further: why may not Man's Spirit trans-

Perſian Letters. 277

transfer upon the product of his brain, the ſame qualities it has in its ſelf? is it not done every day? at leaſt it is worth while to try: I am tired out with the Apothecaries; their Syrops, their Juleps, and all the Galenical Druggs, are ruinous both to the Patient's health and pocket. I'll take another courſe; I'll try the virtue of Spirits. Upon this Idea he drew up a new Pharmacy, as you will ſee by the deſcription I am going to give you, of the principal Recipes he preſcribes.

A purgative Piliſane.

Take three leaves of Ariſtotles; Logic in Greek; two leaves of ſome tract of ſcholastic Theology, the ſharpeſt you can get; for example, the ſubtle Scotus; four of Paracelſus; one of Avicenna; ſix of Averroes, three of Porphyry; as many of Plotinus; as many of Jamolicus. Inſuſe the whole twenty four Hours; and take of it four times a day.

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A stronger Purge.

Take ten A * * * of C * * * concerning the B * * and the C * * of the I * * ; distil them in Balneo Mariæ, mortify a drop of the acrid and sharp humour which proceeds from it in a glass of common Water, and swallow the whole down at once.

A Vomitive.

Take six Hqrangues, twelve funeral Orations indifferently, carefully avoiding however not to take those of Mr. D. N. ; a collection of new Opera's, fifty Romances, thirty new Memoirs : put the whole into a long narrow-neck'd round-belly'd Bottle; let it digest two days; then distil them in hot sand : and if this will not do,

Another, stronger.

Take a Leaf of marble Paper, which has serv'd for a cover to the Collection of

of J. F's pieces: infuse it the space of three Minutes, warm a spoonful of this infusion, and swallow it.

A very simple Remedy against an Asthma.

Read all the works of the reverend Father Maimbourg, a quondam Jesuit; beware you stop not till you come to the end of a Period, and you will find a gradual return of the faculty of breathing, without needing to repeat the remedy.

Against the Itch, Scurf, Scald-heads, Farcy in Horses.

Take three of Aristotle's Categories; three metaphysical degrees, one distinction, six of Chapelain's Verses, one Phrase out of the Letters of the Abbot de St. Cyran; write the whole upon a piece of Paper, then fold it up, fasten it to a Ribbon, and wear it about your neck.

Mira.

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Miraculum Chymicum de violentâ fermentatione cum fumo, igne & flammâ.

Misce *Questelhanam* infusionem, cum infusione *Lallemanianâ*: fiat fermentatio cum magnâ vi, impetu, & tonitru, acutis pugnantibus, & invicem penetrantibus alcalinos sales: fiet *Evaporatio ardentium spirituum*: pone liquorem fermentatum in alembico: nihil inde extrahes, & nihil invenies, nisi caput mortuum.

Lenitivum.

Recipe *Moline* *Anodini* chartas duas; *Eseobaris* relaxatæ paginas sex; *Pasquis* emollientis folium unum: infunde in aqua communis lb. iij. ad consumptionem dimidiæ partis colentur & exprimantur; & in expressione dissolve *Baam* deterfori, & *Tamburini* adjuventis folia iij. Fiat *Clyster*.

In

In Cloroſim, quam vulgus pallidos
colores, aut febrim amatoriam ap-
pellat.

*Recipe Aretini figuras quatuor; R.
Thama Sanibii de Maſtrimonio folia
ii. infundantur in aque communis li-
bras quinque.
Fiat Piſana aperiens.*

THEſe are the Drugs, which our
Phyſician adminiſter'd with a ſuc-
ceſs not to be imagin'd. He was
againſt the uſe of your rare and un-
common Medicines, and ſuch as
are ſcarce any where to be met with,
becauſe he would not ruin his Pa-
tients: As for example, an Epistle
Dedicatory that never made any
body yawn; a Preface, too ſhort;
a Paſtoral Letter written by a Bi-
ſhop; and the work of a Janſeniſt,
deſpiſ'd by a Janſeniſt, or elſe ad-
mir'd by a Jeſuit: ſuch ſort of Re-
medies are only fit to ſupport
Quackery,

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Quackery, to which he had an unsurmountable Antipathy.

LETTER CXXXVIII.

Usbek to Redi, at Venice.

IT has been long ago said that Sincerity was the Soul of a great Minister.

A private man can enjoy obscurity wherever he is; he only discredits himself with some few people; he is conceal'd to others; but a Minister who wants Probity, has as many Witnesses, as many Judges, as there are Men under his Government.

May I speak a bold word? The greatest mischief done by a Minister without Probity, is not disserving his Prince, and ruining his People: there is another in my opinion a thousand times more dangerous; and that is the ill example he sets.

Thou

Thou know'st that I travell'd a long time in the *Indies*: I there saw a Nation naturally generous, perverted in an instant, from the lowest to the highest, purely by the bad example of a chief Minister. I have seen a whole People, among whom Generosity, Probity, Candor, Sincerity were always lookt upon as inherent qualities, become at once the worst People in the world; the Evil spreading it self, not even the purest members escaping it: the most virtuous men doing the unworthiest actions; and violating on all occasions the first principles of Justice, upon this frivolous pretence, that she was violated to their Hands.

They call'd upon the most odious Laws to warrant the basest actions; and gave Injustice and Treachery, the name of Necessity.

I have seen the faith of contracts banish'd, the most sacred conventions annihilated, all the Laws of Families turn'd topsy-turvy. I have
seen

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seen covetous debtors, proud of an insolent poverty, become the most scandalous instruments of the fury of the Laws, and of the rigour of the times; pretending a payment, instead of making one, and cutting the very throats of their benefactors.

I have seen others still worse, buying up, almost for nothing, or rather picking up from the Earth, Oak Leaves, to exchange 'em for the substance of the Widows and the Orphans.

I have seen suddenly sprung up in every Heart, an insatiable thirst after Money. I have seen form'd in a moment a cursed conspiracy to be Rich; not by a commendable labour, and a generous industry, but by the ruin of the Prince, the State, and Fellow-Citizens.

I have seen an honest Citizen, in those unhappy times, never go to bed without saying, I have ruin'd one Family to-day, and to-morrow I'll ruin another.

I

I am going, ſaid another, with a black man with an Inkhorn in his hand, and a ſteel Pen in his Ear, to aſſaſſinate all thoſe to whom I have any obligation.

Another ſaid, I ſee I ſhall make up my matters: 'tis true, when I went three days ago to make a certain payment, I left a whole Family in tears; I conſum'd the Portions of two deſerving young Ladies, and robb'd a young Lad of his education; their Father will dye with grief, the Mother has broke her heart: but I did no more than what the Law allowed.

What greater crime can there be, than that which a Miniſter commits, when he corrupts the manners of a whole Nation, degrades the moſt generous Souls, tarniſhes the luſtre of dignities, darkens even virtue it ſelf, and confounds the moſt exalted birth in the univerſal contempt?

What will Poſterity ſay, when ſhe muſt bloſſ for her forefathers?

what

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what will the future People say, when they shall compare the Iron of their ancestors, with the Gold of those to whom they immediately owe the light? I doubt not but the Gentry will expunge out of their Scutcheons those infamous Quarterings which dishonour them; and will leave the present Generation in the frightful Nothingness whereto they have brought themselves.

Paris, 11th of the Moon
Rhamazan, 1720.

LETTER CXXXIX.

The Chief Eunuch to Usbek.

THINGS are come to that pass here, there's no enduring it: thy Wives fancy'd thy departure left them an entire impunity; here are strange doings: I can't forbear trembling

trembling my self at the recital of what I'm about to tell thee.

Zelis going not long since to the Mosque let down her Veil, and appear'd bare-fac'd before the whole People.

I caught *Zachi* in bed with one of her female Slaves; a thing so severely forbid by the Laws of the Seraglio.

By the greatest chance in the world I came by a Letter, which I send thee. I have not been able to find out who it was directed to.

Last night a young man was found in the Garden of the Seraglio, and he made his escape over the wall.

Add to this what has not as yet reacht my certain knowledge; for assuredly thou art betray'd. I wait thy Orders; and till the happy moment that I receive them, I shall be under terrible apprehensions: but if thou committest not all these women to my discretion, I will not answer for any one of 'em, and

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and shall have every day as bad news
as this to send thee.

*From the Seraglio of Ispahan,
the 1st of the Moon Regeb,
1717.*

LETTER CXL.

*Usbek to the Chief Eunuch at
the Seraglio of Ispahan.*

R Ecieve with this Letter an ab-
solute power over the whole
Seraglio: command with the same
authority as my self: let fear and ter-
ror accompany thy steps: run from
one apartment to another distribut-
ing chastisements and corrections:
let every thing be brought under
consternation: let all dissolve into
tears before thee: interrogate the
whole Seraglio: begin with the
slaves: spare not my own favourite:
let nothing escape thy dreadful tri-
bunal: bring to light the most hid-
den

den secrets : purify that infamous place, and re-call exil'd Virtue : for from this moment be upon thy head the minutest faults that shall be committed : I suspect *Zelis* to be the person to whom that Letter, which so surpriz'd you, was directed : list into this affair with the Eyes of a Linc.

*From * * *, the 11th of the
Moon Zilhage, 1718.*

LETTER CXLI.

Narsit to Usbek, at Paris.

THE Chief Eunuch is newly dead, magnificent Lord : as I am the eldest of thy Slaves, I have taken his place, till thou shalt have signify'd upon whom thou pleasest to cast thy Eye.

Two days after his death, a Letter was brought me from thee, directed to him : I presum'd not to

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open

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open it: I respectfully put it into a cover: and have lock'd it up, until thou makest known thy sacred pleasure.

Yesterday a Slave, in the dead of night, came and inform'd me, he had found a young man in the Seraglio: I arose: I examined into the thing; and behold it was a Vision.

I kiss thy feet, sublime Lord; and I beseech thee to rely on my Zeal, my Experience, and my advanc'd Age.

*From the Seraglio of Ispahan,
the 5th of the Moon Gem-
madi 1. 1718.*



LETTER

LETTER CXLII.

Usbek to Narfit, at the Seraglio of Hispahan.

WRetch, thou art in possession of Letters, which enjoyn a speedy and severe execution: the least delay may drive me to madness, and thou remainest calm beneath an idle pretext!

There are horrible doings: I know not but one half of my Slaves deserve death: I send you the Letter which the Chief Eunuch wrote to me thereupon, before he dy'd: Had you open'd the Pacquet directed to him, you had therein found sanguinary Orders: read therefore those Orders, and if you execute 'em not, you shall be cut off.

*From * * *, the 25th of the
Moon Ghalval, 1718.*

LETTER CXLIII.

Solim to Usbek, at Paris.

SHould I longer keep silence,
 I should be as guilty as those
 Criminals thou hast in the Seraglio.

I was the Confident of the Chief
 Eunuch, the faithfullest of all thy
 Slaves. When he saw himself draw-
 ing towards his end, he sent for
 me, and deliver'd himself in these
 words : I'm a dying man ; and no-
 thing troubles me, but that the last
 thing I beheld, was the Disloyalty
 of my Master's women : Heaven
 preserve him from the misfortunes
 I foresee : and when I am dead,
 may my threatening Ghost appear to
 those perfidious Wretches, to re-
 mind them of their Duty, and once
 again strike terror into them ! Here
 are the Keys of this venerable place :
 go and carry them to the eldest of
 the black Eunuchs ; but if after my
 death he fails in his Duty, neglect
 not

not thou to advertiſe thy Maſter of it. Saying theſe words, he expired in my arms.

What he wrote to thee ſome time before he dy'd, concerning the behaviour of thy wives, I know not: there is in the Seraglio a Letter which would have carried terror along with it, had it been opened; that which thou wroteſt ſince, was intercepted three Leagues from this Place: I know not what to make on't: every thing falls out unluckily.

All this time thy wives obſerve no manner of Decorum: ſince the death of the Chief Eunuch, they think they may do any thing: none but *Roxana* continues dutiful, and preſerves her Modeſty. The others grow worſe and worſe every day. We no longer behold upon the countenance of thy wives that masculine and ſevere Virtue, which was wont to be ſo conſpicuous in every feature: A new kind of Pleaſure and Joyfulneſs that reigns among them,

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is in my judgment an infallible token of some new Satisfaction. In the minuteſt things I obſerve a Licentiousneſs till now unknown : there prevails among thy very Slaves a certain Indolence which ſurprizes me : they no longer obſerve the Rules of their Duty : they have not that Eagerneſs nor Zeal for thy Service, which formerly ſeem'd to animate the whole Seraglio.

Thy women have been eight days in the Country, at one of thy privateſt houſes. The Slave who hath the care thereof, is ſaid to have been corrupted; and that, ſome time before thy wives arrived there, he had conceal'd two men in a hole within the walls of the principal Chamber, from whence they came out in the night ſeaſon, after we were retired : the old Eunuch, who at preſent preſides over us, is an infirm Wretch, and believes every thing they ſay to him.

My Choler boils at the thoughts of ſo much Treachery : and if Heaven

ven so ordains it for thy advantage and better service, that I shall be thought capable of governing : I promise thee, and will undertake, that if thy women are not Virtuous, they shall at least be Loyal.

*From the Seraglio of Ispahan,
the 6th of the Moon Rebiab,
1719.*

LETTER CXLIV.

Narsit to Usbek, at Paris.

R Oxana and Zelis desired to go into the Country : I did not think fit to refuse them. Happy Usbek, thou hast faithful wives and vigilant Slaves : my Lot is fallen to command in a place which Virtue seems to have chosen for an Asylum : depend upon it that nothing shall pass therein, which thy own eyes could be offended at the sight of.

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A misfortune has happened, which gives me no small disturbance. Some *Armenian* Merchants newly arrived at *Ispahan*, were charged with a Letter from thee to me: I sent a Slave to fetch it: in his return he was robbed; so that the Letter is lost. Write therefore to me with speed: for in the present circumstances of affairs, thou must needs have things of moment to communicate.

*From the Seraglio of Fatma,
the 6th of the Month
Rebiab, 1719.*

LETTER CXLV.

Usbek to Solim, at the Seraglio of Ispahan.

I Put the Sword into thy hand: I intrust thee with that which at present is the dearest thing to me in the world; namely my Vengeance:
enter

enter upon this new Employ ; but leave behind thee thy heart and thy humanity : I have written to my wives, to obey thee implicitly : in the confusion of so many Crimes they shall fall down at the least glance of thy Eye. I must owe to thee my happiness and my quiet : give me back my Seraglio as I lose it ; but let it be first expiated : root out the guilty, and make such tremble as would have been so. What rewards may'st thou not expect from thy Master, for such signal services? It is thy own fault, if thou dost not only set thy self vastly above thy condition ; but all recompences that ever entered into thy heart to conceive.

Paris, 4th of the Moors
Chahban, 1719.

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LETTER CXLVI.

*Usbek to his Wives, at the
Seraglio of Ispahan.*

MAY this Letter be like a Thunder-bolt, bursting from a Cloud amidst a storm of rattling Hail and Lightning! *Solim* is your Chief Eunuch not to watch ye, but to punish ye: let the whole Seraglio humble it self before him: he is to inspect your past actions; and for the time to come he shall bear so strict a hand over ye, that you shall at least lament your loss of Liberty, if you lament not that of your Virtue.

*Paris, the 4th of the Moon
Chahban, 1719.*

LETTER

LETTER CXLVII.

Usbek to Nessir, at Ispahan.

Happy he, that knowing the value of a calm and undisturbed life, reposes his heart amidst his own Family, and knows no other Country but that wherein he drew his first Breath.

I live here in a barbarous Climate, present to every thing that makes me uneasy, absent from every thing that may make me happy: a heaviness seizes me; I am sadly dejected; I sink beneath the pressure: methinks I am going to be Annihilated; nor do I scarce feel my self to be alive, but only at such times when a dismal Fit of Jealousy begins to kindle it self, and breed in my Soul Fears, Suspicions, Hatreds and Repinings.

Thou knowest me, *Nessir*; thou hast always been as thoroughly acquainted with my Heart as with
thy

thy own : I should move thy Pity, wert thou to know my deplorable condition : sometimes I wait six long months for news from the Scraglio : I count the moments as they slide away ; my impatience makes them seem long and tedious : and when the long look'd-for Minute approaches, there is a sudden revolution in my heart, my hand trembles in opening the fatal Letter : that disquiet which rack'd me before, I at such times look upon as the happiest situation I could possibly enjoy ; and I dread being put out of it by a blow that will be more cruel to me than ten thousand deaths.

But whatever reason I had to leave my Country ; tho' I owe my Life to my retreat ; I can no longer, *Ness*, continue in this terrible exile. Ah why do I survive the Chagrin that every moment preys upon me ? I have a thousand times press'd *Rim* to leave this strange Land : but he opposes all my resolutions :

lutions : he frames a thousand pretences : he seems to have forgot his Country, or rather he seems to have forgot his Friend ; so unconcern'd is he at my uneasiness.

Woe is me ! I long to re-visit my native Country, perhaps to become still more wretched ! what shall I do there ? only bring back an object for my enemies to wreak their malice upon. This is not all : I shall enter into the Seraglio : I shall there demand an account of the fatal hours that pass'd in my absence : and if I find any one guilty, what will become of me ? if only the idea of it is so intollerable to me at this distance, how shall I bear it when my presence shall render it still more sensible ? how must it be for me, to see and to hear what I can't so much as think of, without shivering with horror ? Lastly, how must it be, when the Punishments which I my self shall pronounce, shall be the eternal marks of my Confusion and Distraction ?

I

I shall go and shut my self up within those walls, less terrible to the women that are kept there, than to me: I shall enter with all my Suspicions about me: their fond Caresses will not in the least diminish them: in bed, in their very arms, I shall enjoy nothing but disquiet; at a time so unfit for reflection, my Jealousy will find matter for it: Worthless scum of the Creation: Vile slaves whose heart has been for ever shut to every sentiment of Love; you would cease to lament your condition, did you but know the unhappiness of mine.

Paris, 4th of the Moon
Chahban, 1719.

LET

LETTER CXLVIII.

Roxana to Usbek, at Paris.

HOrrou, Darkness, and Fear reign throughout the whole Seraglio: It is wrapt in a terrible mourning: a Tiger each moment lets loose all his rage; he has sentenc'd to a most severe punishment, two white Eunuchs that have confest nothing but their Innocence: he has sold part of our Slaves: and has oblig'd us to interchange among our selves such others as he did not dispose of. *Zachi* and *Zelis* have receiv'd in their chamber, in the obscurity of the night, a most shameful treatment: the sacrilegious Wretch was so bold as to lay his vile hands on them: he keeps us shut up in our respective apartments; and though no soul is with us, he obliges us to be always veil'd: We are not suffer'd to speak to each other: it were

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were a crime for any body to write to us; in ſhort, we have liberty to do nothing but to weep.

A band of new Eunuchs is enter'd into the Seraglio, where they beſiege us night and day: our ſleep is inceſſantly interrupted by their real or pretended ſuſpicions. All my comfort is, that this cannot laſt long, and that my afflictions will end with my life, and that very ſoon: cruel *Usbek*, I ſhall not give thee an opportunity to put a ſtop to theſe outrages.

*From the Seraglio at Iſpahan,
the 2d of the Moon Mahar-
ram, 1710.*

LETTER CXLIX.

Solim to Usbek, at Paris.

I Lament my fate, magnificent Lord! and thy fate I lament too: never did faithful Servant feel
ſuch

such a weight of woe as I do. Behold here thy misfortunes and mine: I cannot write them without trembling.

I swear by all the Prophets in Heaven, that from the time thou intrustedst thy Wives to my care, I have watched them night and day: I have not one moment suspended my vigilance: I began my Ministry with Chastisements; which I put a stop to without quitting my natural austerity.

But what am I talking of? why should I boast to thee of a fidelity that has been of no use to thee? forget all my past services: look upon me as a traitor, and punish me for all those crimes which I have not been able to prevent.

Roxana, the proud *Roxana*! O Heavens, whom shall we trust? Thou didst suspect *Zacbi*, and wast perfectly secure of *Roxana*; but her stern virtue was all a cheat; it was only a Veil to her perfidiousness: I surprized her in the arms
of

of a young man, who, as soon as he saw he was discover'd, fell upon me: he gave me two wounds with his Dagger; the Eunuchs coming in at the noise, surrounded him; he defended himself a considerable time, and wounded several of them; he even attempted to go back into the Chamber, to die, he said, in *Roxana's* sight: but at length he was overpowered, and fell dead at our feet.

I know not, sublime Lord, whether I ought to wait for thy severe orders: thou hast committed thy vengeance to my care, and I ought not to defer it.

*From the Seraglio at Ispahan,
the 8th of the Moon Rebi-
ab, 1720.*

LET-

LETTER CL.

Roxana to Usbek, at Paris.

YES, I have deceived thee, I have corrupted thy Eunuchs: I made a sport of thy Jealousy; and found means to turn thy hated Seraglio into a place of pleasure and delight.

I feel the near approaches of Death; the poison is working in my veins. For, what should I do here, since the only man that made life agreeable is no more? I am dying: my Ghost is upon the wing, but takes its flight in good company: I have just sent away those sacrilegious Guardians that have shed the purest blood in the world.

How could'st thou think me so credulous, as to fancy my self sent into the world for no other purpose than to adore thy Caprices? that at the same time thou allow-
ed'st

ed'st thy self all manner of liberties, thou hadst a right to confine all my desires? No: I liv'd indeed in servitude, but still I was free: I reformed thy Laws by those of Nature, and my Mind still kept it self independant.

Thou oughtest even to thank me for the Sacrifice I made thee, in humbling my self so much as to seem faithful to thee; in poorly confining within my heart what I ought to have made conspicuous to the whole world: lastly, in prophaning of Vertue, by suffering to go by that name, my submission to thy whims.

Thou wast amaz'd at not finding in me the transports of Love: hadst thou thoroughly known me, thou hadst found nothing in my heart but the most violent hatred.

But thou hast had a long time the advantage of believing, that a heart like mine was a slave to thee: we were both of us happy: you fancy'd you cheated me, and

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I all the while actually cheated you.

Doubtless this Language seems new to thee: is it possible, after I have overwhelm'd thee with grief, I should likewise force thee to admire my courage? but it is done: the Poison consumes me: my strength forsakes me: my pen drops out of my hand: I feel even my very Hatred decay; I am Dying.

*From the Sanaglio at Ispahan,
the 8th of the Moon Rebi-
ab, 1720.*

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